











Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2015

**Large Paper Edition**

---

THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

By JOHN FISKE

VOLUME I





# THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

*WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF ANCIENT AMERICA  
AND THE SPANISH CONQUEST*

By JOHN FISKE

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME FIRST

PART TWO



**CAMBRIDGE**

Printed at the Riverside Press

M DCCC XCII

Copyright, 1892  
By JOHN FISKE

*All rights reserved*

Two Hundred and Fifty Copies Printed

No. 449

# CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER III.

### EUROPE AND CATHAY.

|   | PAGE     |
|---|----------|
| Why the voyages of the Northmen were not followed up . . . . .  | 256      |
| Ignorance of their geographical significance . . . . .  | 257      |
| Lack of instruments for ocean navigation . . . . .  | 257      |
| Condition of Europe in the year 1000 . . . . .  | 258, 259 |
| It was not such as to favour colonial enterprise . . . . .  | 260      |
| The outlook of Europe was toward Asia . . . . .   | 261      |
| Routes of trade between Europe and Asia . . . . .   | 262      |
| Claudius Ptolemy and his knowledge of the earth . . . . .   | 263      |
| Early mention of China . . . . .  | 264      |
| The monk Cosmas Indicopleustes . . . . .  | 265      |
| Shape of the earth, according to Cosmas . . . . .   | 266, 267 |
| His knowledge of Asia . . . . .   | 268      |
| The Nestorians . . . . .  | 268      |
| Effects of the Saracen conquests . . . . .  | 269      |
| Constantinople in the twelfth century . . . . .   | 270      |
| The Crusades . . . . .  | 270-274  |
| Barbarizing character of Turkish conquest . . . . .   | 271      |
| General effects of the Crusades . . . . .   | 272      |
| The Fourth Crusade . . . . .  | 273      |
| Rivalry between Venice and Genoa . . . . .  | 274      |
| Centres and routes of mediæval trade . . . . .  | 275, 276 |
| Effects of the Mongol conquests . . . . .   | 277      |
| Cathay, origin of the name . . . . .  | 277      |
| Carpini and Rubruquis . . . . .   | 278      |
| First knowledge of an eastern ocean beyond Cathay . . . . .   | 278      |
| The data were thus prepared for Columbus ; but as yet nobody reasoned from these data to a practical conclusion . . . . . | 279      |

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| The Polo brothers . . . . .   | 280      |
| Kublai Khan's message to the Pope . . . . .   | 281      |
| Marco Polo and his travels in Asia . . . . .  | 281, 282 |
| First recorded voyage of Europeans around the Indo-<br>Chinese peninsula . . . . .                              | 282      |
| Return of the Polos to Venice . . . . .   | 283      |
| Marco Polo's book, written in prison at Genoa, 1299 ;<br>its great contributions to geographical knowledge      | 284, 285 |
| Prester John . . . . .  | 285      |
| Griffins and Arimaspians . . . . .  | 286      |
| The Catalan map, 1375 . . . . .   | 288, 289 |
| Other visits to China . . . . .   | 287-291  |
| Overthrow of the Mongol dynasty, and shutting up of<br>China . . . . .  | 291      |
| First rumours of the Molucca islands and Japan . . . . .  | 292      |
| The accustomed routes of Oriental trade were cut off<br>in the fifteenth century by the Ottoman Turks . . . . . | 293      |
| Necessity for finding an "outside route to the Indies" . . . . .  | 294      |

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE SEARCH FOR THE INDIES.

#### EASTWARD OR PORTUGUESE ROUTE.

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Question as to whether Asia could be reached by sail-<br>ing around Africa . . . . . | 295      |
| Views of Eratosthenes . . . . .  | 296      |
| Opposing theory of Ptolemy . . . . .   | 297      |
| Story of the Phœnician voyage in the time of Necho                                   | 298-300  |
| Voyage of Hanno . . . . .  | 300, 301 |
| Voyages of Sataspes and Eudoxus . . . . .  | 302      |
| Wild exaggerations . . . . .   | 303      |
| Views of Pomponius Mela . . . . .  | 304, 305 |
| Ancient theory of the five zones . . . . .   | 306, 307 |
| The Inhabited World, or Œcumene, and the Anti-<br>podes . . . . .                    | 308      |
| Curious notions about Taprobane (Ceylon) . . . . .                                   | 309      |
| Question as to the possibility of crossing the torrid<br>zone . . . . .              | 309      |
| Notions about sailing "up and down hill" . . . . .                                   | 310, 311 |

# CONTENTS.

vii

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Superstitious fancies . . . . .  | 311, 312 |
| Clumsiness of ships in the fifteenth century . . . . .   | 312      |
| Dangers from famine and scurvy . . . . .   | 313      |
| The mariner's compass ; an interesting letter from Brunetto Latini to Guido Cavalcanti . . . . .   | 313-315  |
| Calculating latitudes and longitudes . . . . .   | 315      |
| Prince Henry the Navigator . . . . .   | 316-326  |
| His idea of an ocean route to the Indies, and what it might bring . . . . .  | 318      |
| The Sacred Promontory . . . . .  | 319      |
| The Madeira and Canary islands . . . . .   | 320-322  |
| Gil Eannes passes Cape Bojador . . . . .   | 323      |
| Beginning of the modern slave-trade, 1442 . . . . .  | 323      |
| Papal grant of heathen countries to the Portuguese crown . . . . .   | 324, 325 |
| Advance to Sierra Leone . . . . .  | 326      |
| Advance to the Hottentot coast . . . . .   | 326, 327 |
| Note upon the extent of European acquaintance with savagery and the lower forms of barbarism previous to the fifteenth century . . . . . | 327-329  |
| Effect of the Portuguese discoveries upon the theories of Ptolemy and Mela . . . . .   | 329, 330 |
| News of Prester John ; Covilham's journey . . . . .  | 331      |
| Bartholomew Dias passes the Cape of Good Hope and enters the Indian ocean . . . . .  | 332      |
| Some effects of this discovery . . . . .   | 333      |
| Bartholomew Columbus took part in it . . . . .   | 333      |
| Connection between these voyages and the work of Christopher Columbus . . . . .  | 334      |

## CHAPTER V.

### THE SEARCH FOR THE INDIES.

#### WESTWARD OR SPANISH ROUTE.

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Sources of information concerning the life of Columbus ; Las Casas and Ferdinand Columbus . . . . . | 335      |
| The Biblioteca Colombina at Seville . . . . .   | 336, 337 |
| Bernaldez and Peter Martyr . . . . .  | 338      |
| Letters of Columbus . . . . .   | 338      |

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Defects in Ferdinand's information . . . . .  | 339, 340 |
| Researches of Henry Harrisse . . . . .  | 341      |
| Date of the birth of Columbus ; archives of Savona . . . . .  | 342      |
| Statement of Bernaldez . . . . .  | 343      |
| Columbus's letter of September, 1501 . . . . .  | 344      |
| The balance of probability is in favour of 1436 . . . . .   | 345      |
| The family of Domenico Colombo, and its changes of residence . . . . .  | 346, 347 |
| Columbus tells us that he was born in the city of Genoa . . . . .   | 348      |
| His early years . . . . .   | 349-351  |
| Christopher and his brother Bartholomew at Lisbon 351, 352  |          |
| Philippa Moñiz de Perestrelo . . . . .  | 352      |
| Personal appearance of Columbus . . . . .   | 353      |
| His marriage, and life upon the island of Porto Santo . . . . .   | 353, 354 |
| The king of Portugal asks advice of the great astronomer Toscanelli . . . . .   | 355      |
| Toscanelli's first letter to Columbus . . . . .   | 356-361  |
| His second letter to Columbus . . . . .   | 361, 362 |
| Who first suggested the feasibility of a westward route to the Indies ? Was it Columbus ? . . . . .   | 363      |
| Perhaps it was Toscanelli . . . . .   | 363, 364 |
| Note on the date of Toscanelli's first letter to Columbus . . . . .   | 365-367  |
| The idea, being naturally suggested by the globular form of the earth, was as old as Aristotle . . . . .  | 368, 369 |
| Opinions of ancient writers . . . . .   | 370      |
| Opinions of Christian writers . . . . .   | 371      |
| The "Imago Mundi" of Petrus Alliacus . . . . .  | 372, 373 |
| Ancient estimates of the size of the globe and the length of the <i>Œcumene</i> . . . . .   | 374      |
| Toscanelli's calculation of the size of the earth, and of the position of Japan (Cipango) . . . . .   | 375, 376 |
| Columbus's opinions of the size of the globe, the length of the <i>Œcumene</i> , and the width of the Atlantic ocean from Portugal to Japan . . . . . | 377-380  |
| There was a fortunate mixture of truth and error in these opinions of Columbus . . . . .  | 381      |
| The whole point and purport of Columbus's scheme  |          |

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| lay in its promise of a route to the Indies shorter than that which the Portuguese were seeking by way of Guinea . . . . .                           | 381      |
| Columbus's speculations on climate; his voyages to Guinea and into the Arctic ocean . . . . .  | 382      |
| He may have reached Jan Mayen island, and stopped at Iceland . . . . .   | 383, 384 |
| The Scandinavian hypothesis that Columbus "must have" heard and understood the story of the Vinland voyages . . . . .                                | 384, 385 |
| It has not a particle of evidence in its favour . . . . .  | 385      |
| It is not probable that Columbus knew of Adam of Bremen's allusion to Vinland, or that he would have understood it if he had read it . . . . .       | 386      |
| It is doubtful if he would have stumbled upon the story in Iceland . . . . .   | 387      |
| If he had heard it, he would probably have classed it with such tales as that of St. Brandan's isle . . . . .  | 388      |
| He could not possibly have obtained from such a source his opinion of the width of the ocean . . . . .   | 388, 389 |
| If he had known and understood the Vinland story, he had the strongest motives for proclaiming it and no motive whatever for concealing it . . . . . | 390-392  |
| No trace of a thought of Vinland appears in any of his voyages . . . . .   | 393      |
| Why did not Norway or Iceland utter a protest in 1493? . . . . .   | 393      |
| The idea of Vinland was not associated with the idea of America until the seventeenth century . . . . .  | 394      |
| Recapitulation of the genesis of Columbus's scheme . . . . .   | 395      |
| Martin Behaim's improved astrolabe . . . . .   | 395, 396 |
| Negotiations of Columbus with John II. of Portugal . . . . .   | 396, 397 |
| The king is persuaded into a shabby trick . . . . .  | 398      |
| Columbus leaves Portugal and enters into the service of Ferdinand and Isabella, 1486 . . . . .   | 398-400  |
| The junta at Salamanca, 1486 . . . . .   | 401      |
| Birth of Ferdinand Columbus, August 15, 1488 . . . . .   | 401      |
| Bartholomew Columbus returns from the Cape of Good Hope, December, 1487 . . . . .  | 402, 403 |

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Christopher visits Bartholomew at Lisbon, cir. September, 1488, and sends him to England . . .                    | 404      |
| Bartholomew, after mishaps, reaches England cir. February, 1490, and goes thence to France before 1492 . . . . .  | 405-407  |
| The duke of Medina-Celi proposes to furnish the ships for Columbus, but the queen withholds her consent . . . . . | 408, 409 |
| Columbus makes up his mind to get his family together and go to France, October, 1491 . . .                       | 409, 410 |
| A change of fortune ; he stops at La Rábida, and meets the prior Juan Perez, who writes to the queen . . .        | 411      |
| Columbus is summoned back to court . . . . .  | 411      |
| The junto before Granada, December, 1491 . . .  | 412, 413 |
| Surrender of Granada, January 2, 1492 . . . . .   | 414      |
| Columbus negotiates with the queen, who considers his terms exorbitant . . . . .                                  | 414-416  |
| Interposition of Luis de Santangel . . . . .  | 416      |
| Agreement between Columbus and the sovereigns . . .   | 417      |
| Cost of the voyage . . . . .  | 418      |
| Dismay at Palos . . . . .   | 419      |
| The three famous caravels . . . . .   | 420      |
| Delay at the Canary islands . . . . .   | 421      |
| Martin Behaim and his globe . . . . .   | 422, 423 |
| Columbus starts for Japan, September 6, 1492 . . .  | 424      |
| Terrors of the voyage :— 1. Deflection of the needle . . .  | 425      |
| 2. The Sargasso sea . . . . .   | 426, 427 |
| 3. The trade wind . . . . .   | 428      |
| Impatience of the crews . . . . .   | 428      |
| Change of course from W. to W. S. W . . . . .   | 429, 430 |
| Discovery of land, October 12, 1492 . . . . .   | 431      |
| Guanahani : which of the Bahama islands was it ? . . .  | 432      |
| Groping for Cipango and the route to Quinsay . . .  | 433, 434 |
| Columbus reaches Cuba, and sends envoys to find a certain Asiatic prince . . . . .                                | 434, 435 |
| He turns eastward and Pinzon deserts him . . . . .  | 435      |
| Columbus arrives at Hayti and thinks it must be Japan . . .   | 436      |
| His flagship is wrecked, and he decides to go back to Spain . . . . .   | 437      |
| Building of the blockhouse, La Navidad . . . . .  | 438      |

# CONTENTS.

xi

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Terrible storm in mid-ocean on the return voyage .   | 439      |
| Cold reception at the Azores . . . . .   | 440      |
| Columbus is driven ashore in Portugal, where the king<br>is advised to have him assassinated . . . . . | 440      |
| But to offend Spain so grossly would be imprudent .  | 441      |
| Arrival of Columbus and Pinzon at Palos ; death of<br>Pinzon . . . . .                                 | 442      |
| Columbus is received by the sovereigns at Barce-<br>lona . . . . .                                     | 443, 444 |
| General excitement at the news that a way to the<br>Indies had been found . . . . .                    | 445      |
| This voyage was an event without any parallel in his-<br>tory . . . . .                                | 446      |

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE FINDING OF STRANGE COASTS.

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| The Discovery of America was a gradual process .                       | 447, 448 |
| The letters of Columbus to Santangel and to Sanchez .                  | 449      |
| Versification of the story by Giuliano Dati . . . .                    | 450      |
| Earliest references to the discovery . . . . .                         | 451      |
| The earliest reference in English . . . . .                            | 452      |
| The Portuguese claim to the Indies . . . . .                           | 453      |
| Bulls of Pope Alexander VI. . . . .                                    | 454-458  |
| The treaty of Tordesillas . . . . .                                    | 459      |
| Juan Rodriguez Fonseca, and his relations with Colum-<br>bus . . . . . | 460-462  |
| Friar Boyle . . . . .  | 462      |
| Notable persons who embarked on the second voyage .                    | 463      |
| Departure from Cadiz . . . . .   | 464      |
| Cruise among the Cannibal (Caribbee) islands . . .                     | 465      |
| Fate of the colony at La Navidad . . . . .                             | 466      |
| Building the town of Isabella . . . . .                                | 467      |
| Exploration of Cibao . . . . .   | 467, 468 |
| Westward cruise ; Cape Alpha and Omega . . . .                         | 468-470  |
| Discovery of Jamaica . . . . .   | 471      |
| Coasting the south side of Cuba . . . . .                              | 472      |
| The "people of Mangon" . . . . .                                       | 473      |
| Speculations concerning the Golden Chersonese .                        | 474-476  |

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| A solemn expression of opinion . . . . .  | 477      |
| Vicissitudes of theory . . . . .  | 477, 478 |
| Arrival of Bartholomew Columbus in Hispaniola . . . . .   | 478, 479 |
| Mutiny in Hispaniola ; desertion of Boyle and Margarte . . . . .  | 479, 480 |
| The government of Columbus was not tyrannical . . . . .   | 481      |
| Troubles with the Indians . . . . .   | 481, 482 |
| Mission of Juan Aguado . . . . .  | 482      |
| Discovery of gold mines, and speculations about Ophir . . . . .   | 483      |
| Founding of San Domingo, 1496 . . . . .   | 484      |
| The return voyage to Spain . . . . .  | 485      |
| Edicts of 1495 and 1497 . . . . .   | 486, 487 |
| Vexatious conduct of Fonseca ; Columbus loses his temper . . . . .  | 487      |
| Departure from San Lucar on the third voyage . . . . .  | 488      |
| The belt of calms . . . . .   | 489-491  |
| Trinidad and the Orinoco . . . . .  | 491, 492 |
| Speculations as to the earth's shape ; the mountain of Paradise . . . . .                                       | 494      |
| Relation of the " Eden continent " to " Cochin China " . . . . .  | 495      |
| Discovery of the Pearl Coast . . . . .  | 495      |
| Columbus arrives at San Domingo . . . . .   | 496      |
| Roldan's rebellion and Fonseca's machinations . . . . .   | 496, 497 |
| Gama's voyage to Hindustan, 1497 . . . . .  | 498      |
| Fonseca's creature, Bobadilla, sent to investigate the troubles in Hispaniola . . . . .                         | 499      |
| He imprisons Columbus . . . . .   | 500      |
| And sends him in chains to Spain . . . . .  | 501      |
| Release of Columbus ; his interview with the sovereigns . . . . .   | 502      |
| How far were the sovereigns responsible for Bobadilla ? . . . .   | 503      |
| Ovando, another creature of Fonseca, appointed governor of Hispaniola . . . . .                                 | 503, 504 |
| Purpose of Columbus's fourth voyage, to find a passage from the Caribbee waters into the Indian ocean . . . . . | 504, 506 |
| The voyage across the Atlantic . . . . .  | 506      |
| Columbus not allowed to stop at San Domingo . . . . .   | 507      |
| His arrival at Cape Honduras . . . . .  | 508      |
| Cape Gracias a Dios, and the coast of Veragua . . . . .   | 509      |

# *CONTENTS.*

xiii

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Fruitless search for the strait of Malacca . . . .   | 510      |
| Futile attempt to make a settlement in Veragua . .   | 511      |
| Columbus is shipwrecked on the coast of Jamaica ;<br>shameful conduct of Ovando . . . . .  | 512      |
| Columbus's last return to Spain . . . . .  | 513      |
| His death at Valladolid, May 20, 1506 . . . .  | 513      |
| "Nuevo Mundo ;" arms of Ferdinand Columbus   | 514, 515 |
| When Columbus died, the fact that a New World had<br>been discovered by him had not yet begun to dawn<br>upon his mind, or upon the mind of any voyager or<br>any writer . . . . . | 515, 516 |



## ILLUSTRATIONS.

---

|   | PAGE     |
|---|----------|
| The Sea of Darkness, from <i>Olaus Magnus</i> . . . . . Facing  | 257      |
| Map of the World according to Claudius Ptolemy, cir.<br>A. D. 150, an abridged sketch after a map in <i>Bun-</i><br><i>bury's History of Ancient Geography</i> . . . . . Facing | 265      |
| Two sheets of the Catalan Map, 1375, from <i>Yule's</i><br><i>Cathay, published by the Hakluyt Society</i> . . . . .  | 288, 289 |
| Map of the World according to Pomponius Mela, cir.<br>A. D. 50, from <i>Winsor's Narrative and Critical His-</i><br><i>tory of America</i> . . . . .                            | 304      |
| Map illustrating Portuguese voyages on the coast of<br>Africa, from a sketch by the author . . . . .  | 324      |
| Toscanelli's Map, 1474, redrawn and improved from a<br>sketch in <i>Winsor's America</i> . . . . . Facing   | 357      |
| Annotations by Columbus, reduced from a photograph<br>in <i>Harrisse's Notes on Columbus</i> . . . . .  | 373      |
| Sketch of Martin Behaim's Globe, 1492, preserved in<br>the city hall at Nuremberg, reduced to Mercator's<br>projection and sketched by the author . . . . .                     | 422, 423 |
| Sketch of Martin Behaim's Atlantic Ocean, with out-<br>line of the American continent superimposed, from<br><i>Winsor's America</i> . . . . .                                   | 429      |
| Map of the discoveries made by Columbus in his first<br>and second voyages, sketched by the author . . . . .  | 469      |
| Map of the discoveries made by Columbus in his third<br>and fourth voyages, ditto . . . . .   | 493      |
| Arms of Ferdinand Columbus, from the title-page of<br><i>Harrisse's Fernand Colomb</i> . . . . .  | 515      |



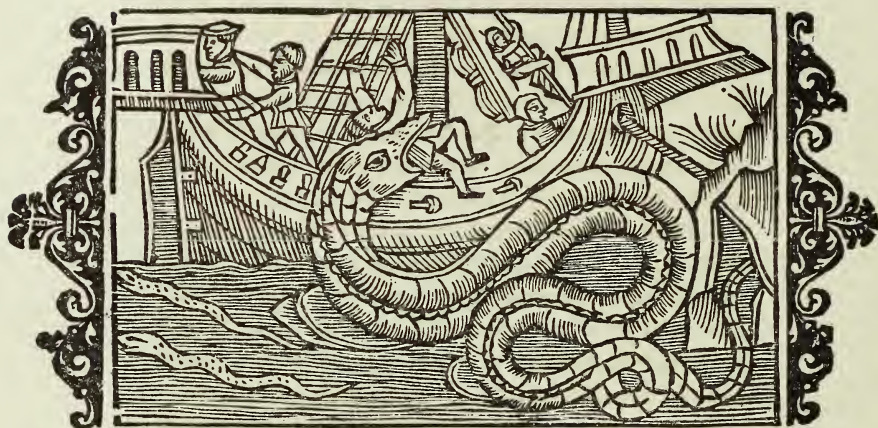
## CHAPTER III.

### EUROPE AND CATHAY.

THE question has sometimes been asked, Why did the knowledge of the voyages to Vinland so long remain confined to the Scandinavian people or a portion of them, and then lapse into oblivion, insomuch that it did not become a matter of notoriety in Europe until after the publication of the celebrated book of Thormodus Torfæus in 1705? Why did not the news of the voyages of Leif and Thorfinn spread rapidly over Europe, like the news of the voyage of Columbus? and why was it not presently followed, like the latter, by a rush of conquerors and colonizers across the Atlantic?

Why the voyages of the Northmen were not followed up.

Such questions arise from a failure to see historical events in their true perspective, and to make the proper allowances for the manifold differences in knowledge and in social and economic conditions which characterize different periods of history. In the present case, the answer is to be found, first, in the geographical ignorance which prevented the Northmen from realizing in the smallest degree what such voyages really signified or were going to signify to posterity; and, secondly, in the political and commercial condition of Europe at the close of the tenth century.



THE SEA OF DARKNESS.

*(From Olaus Magnus.)*

In the first place the route which the Norse voyagers pursued, from Iceland to Greenland and thence to Vinland, was not such as to give them, in their ignorance of the shape of the earth, and with their imperfect knowledge of latitude and longitude, any adequate gauge wherewith to measure their achievement. The modern reader, who has in his mind a general Ignorance of geography. picture of the shape of the northern Atlantic ocean with its coasts, must carefully expel that picture before he can begin to realize how things must have seemed to the Northmen. None of the Icelandic references to Markland and Vinland betray a consciousness that these countries belong to a geographical world outside of Europe. There was not enough organized geographical knowledge for that. They were simply conceived as remote places beyond Greenland, inhabited by inferior but dangerous people. The accidental finding of such places served neither to solve any great commercial problem nor to gratify and provoke scientific curiosity. It was, therefore, not at all strange that it bore no fruit.

Secondly, even if it had been realized, and could have been duly proclaimed throughout Europe, that across the broad Atlantic a new world lay open for colonization, Europe could not have taken advantage of the fact. Now and then a ship might make its way, or be blown, across the waste of waters without compass or astrolabe; but until these instruments Lack of instruments for ocean navigation. were at hand anything like systematic ocean navigation was out of the question; and

from a colonization which could only begin by creeping up into the Arctic seas and taking Greenland on the way, not much was to be expected, after all.

But even if the compass and other facilities for oceanic navigation had been at hand, the state of Europe in the days of Eric the Red was not such as to afford surplus energy for distant enterprise of this sort. Let us for a moment recall what was going on in Europe in the year of grace 1000, just enough to get a suggestive picture of the time. In England the Danish invader, fork-bearded Swend, father of the great Cnut, was wresting the kingship from the feeble grasp of Ethelred the Redeless. In Gaul the little duchy of France, between the Somme and the Loire, had lately become the kingdom of France, and its sovereign, Hugh Capet, had succeeded to feudal rights of lordship over the great dukes and counts whose territories surrounded him on every side; and now Hugh's son, Robert the Debonair, better hymn-writer than warrior, was waging a doubtful struggle with these unruly vassals. It was not yet in any wise apparent what the kingdoms of England and France were going to be. In Germany the youthful Otto III., the "wonder of the world," had just made his weird visit to the tomb of his mighty predecessor at Aachen, before starting on that last journey to Rome which was so soon to cost him his life. Otto's teacher, Gerbert, most erudite of popes, — too learned not to have had dealings with the Devil, — was beginning to raise the

Europe in the  
year 1000.

papacy out of the abyss of infamy into which the preceding age had seen it sink, and so to prepare the way for the far-reaching reforms of Hildebrand. The boundaries of Christendom were as yet narrow and insecure. With the overthrow of Olaf Tryggvesson in this year 1000, and the temporary partition of Norway between Swedes and Danes, the work of Christianizing the North seemed, for the moment, to languish. Upon the eastern frontier the wild Hungarians had scarcely ceased to be a terror to Europe, and in this year Stephen, their first Christian king, began to reign. At the same time the power of heretical Bulgaria, which had threatened to overwhelm the Eastern Empire, was broken down by the sturdy blows of the Macedonian emperor Basil. In this year the Christians of Spain met woful defeat at the hands of Almansor, and there seemed no reason why the Mussulman rule over the greater part of that peninsula should not endure forever.

Thus, from end to end, Europe was a scene of direst confusion, and though, as we now look back upon it, the time seems by no means devoid of promise, there was no such cheering outlook then. Nowhere were the outlines of kingdoms or the ownership of crowns definitely settled. Private war was both incessant and universal; the Truce of God had not yet been proclaimed.<sup>1</sup> As for the

<sup>1</sup> The "Truce of God" (*Treuga Dei*) was introduced by the clergy in Guienne about 1032; it was adopted in Spain before 1050, and in England by 1080. See Datt, *De pace imperii publica*, lib. i. cap. ii. A cessation of all violent quarrels was enjoined, under ecclesiastical penalties, during church festivals, and from every Wednesday evening until the following Monday morning.

common people, their hardships were well-nigh incredible. Amid all this anarchy and misery, at the close of the thousandth year from the birth of Christ, the belief was quite common throughout Europe that the Day of Judgment was at hand for a world grown old in wickedness and ripe for its doom.

It hardly need be argued that a period like this, in which all the vital energy in Europe was consumed in the adjustment of affairs at home, was not fitted for colonial enterprises. Before a people can send forth colonies it must have solved the problem of political life so far as to ensure stability of trade. It is the mercantile spirit that has supported modern colonization, aided by the spirit of intellectual curiosity and the thirst for romantic adventure.

The condition of things was not such as to favour colonial enterprise.

In the eleventh century there was no intellectual curiosity outside the monastery walls, nor had such a feeling become enlisted in the service of commerce. Of trade there was indeed, even in western Europe, a considerable amount, but the commercial marine was in its infancy, and on land the trader suffered sorely at the hands of the robber baron. In those days the fashionable method of compounding with your creditors was, not to offer them fifty cents on the dollar, but to inveigle them into your castle and broil them over a slow fire.

In so far as the attention of people in Europe

This left only about eighty days in the year available for shooting and stabbing one's neighbours. The truce seems to have accomplished much good, though it was very imperfectly observed.

was called to any quarter of the globe outside of the seething turbulence in which they dwelt, it was directed toward Asia. Until after 1492, Europe stood with her back toward the Atlantic. What there might be out beyond that "Sea of Darkness" (*Mare Tenebrosum*), as it used commonly to be called, was a question of little interest and seems to have excited no speculation. In the view of mediæval Europe the inhabited world was cut off on the west by this mysterious ocean, and on the south by the burning sands of Sahara; but eastward it stretched out no one knew how far, and in that direction dwelt tribes and nations which Europe, from time immemorial, had reason to fear. As early as the time of Herodotus, the secular antagonism between Europe and Asia had become a topic of reflection among the Greeks, and was wrought with dramatic effect by that great writer into the structure of his history, culminating in the grand and stirring scenes of the Persian war. A century and a half later the conquests of Alexander the Great added a still more impressive climax to the story. The struggle was afterward long maintained between Roman and Parthian, but from the fifth century after Christ onward through the Middle Ages, it seemed as if the Oriental world would never rest until it had inflicted the extremities of retaliation upon Europe. Whether it was the heathen of the steppes who were in question, from Attila in the fifth century to Batu Khan in the thirteenth, or the followers of the Prophet, who tore away from Christendom the southern

The outlook  
of Europe was  
toward  
Asia.

shores of the Mediterranean, and held Spain in their iron grasp, while from age to age they exhausted their strength in vain against the Eastern Empire, the threatening danger was always coming with the morning sun; whatever might be the shock that took the attention of Europe away from herself, it directed it upon Asia. This is a fact of cardinal importance for us, inasmuch as it was directly through the interest, more and more absorbing, which Europe felt in Asia that the discovery of the western hemisphere was at last effected.

It was not only in war, but in commerce, that the fortunes of Europe were dependent upon her relations with Asia. Since prehistoric times there has always been some commercial intercourse between the eastern shores of the Mediterranean and the peninsula of Hindustan. Tyre and Sidon carried on such trade by way of the Red Sea.<sup>1</sup> After Alexander had led his army to Samarcand and to the river Hyphasis, the acquaintance of the Greeks with Asia was very considerably increased, and important routes of trade were established. One was practically the old Phœnician route, with its western terminus moved from Tyre to Alexandria. Another was by way of the Caspian sea, up the river Oxus, and thence with camels to the banks of the Indus.<sup>2</sup> An intermediate route was through Syria and by way of the Euphrates and the Persian gulf; the route which at one time made the

Routes of  
trade between  
Europe and  
Asia.

<sup>1</sup> Diodorus Siculus, i. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Strabo, xi. 7, § 3.

greatness of Palmyra. After the extension of Roman sway to the Nile, the Euphrates, and the Euxine, these same routes continued to be used. The European commodities carried to India were light woollen cloths, linens, coral, black lead, various kinds of glass vessels, and wine. In exchange for these the traders brought back to Europe divers aromatic spices, black pepper, ivory, cotton fabrics, diamonds, sapphires, and pearls, silk thread and silk stuffs.<sup>1</sup> Detailed accounts of these commercial transactions, and of the wealth of personal experiences that must have been connected with them, are excessively scant. Of the Europeans who, during all the centuries between Alexander and Justinian, made their way to Hindustan or beyond, we know very few by name. The amount of geographical information that was gathered during the first half of this period is shown in the map representing Claudius Ptolemy's knowledge of the earth, about the middle of the second century after Christ. Except for the Scandinavian world, and some very important additions made to the knowledge of Asia by Marco Polo, this map fairly represents the maximum of acquaintance with the earth's surface possessed by Europeans previous to the great voyages of the fifteenth century. It shows a dim knowledge of the mouths of the Ganges, of the island of

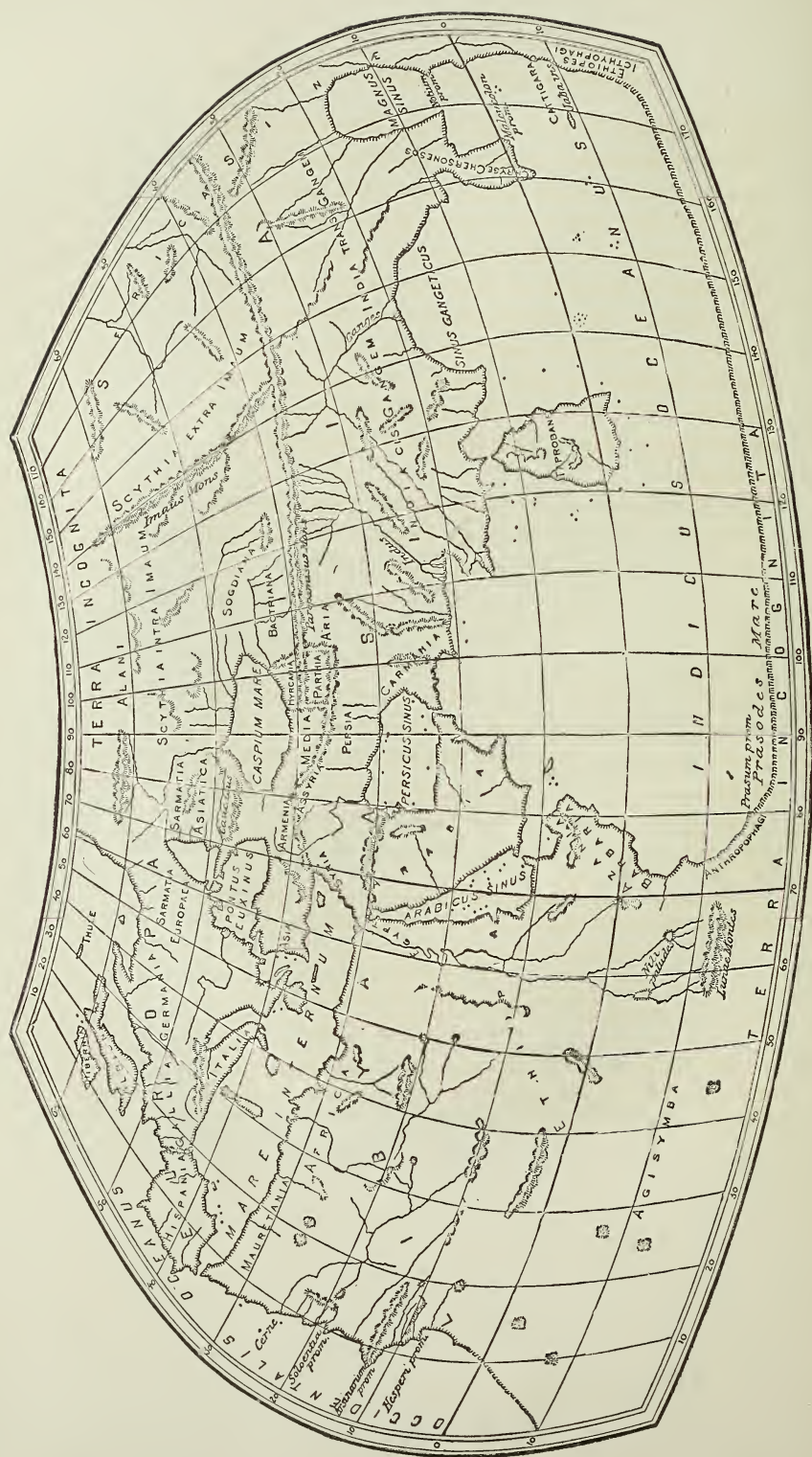
<sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Historical Disquisition concerning the Knowledge which the Ancients had of India*, Dublin, 1791, p. 55. I never have occasion to consult Dr. Robertson without being impressed anew with his scientific habit of thought and the solidity of his scholarship; and in none of his works are these qualities better illustrated than in this noble essay.

Ceylon, and of what we sometimes call Farther India. A very dim knowledge, indeed; for the huge peninsula of Hindustan is shrunk into insignificance, while Taprobane, or Ceylon, unduly magnified, usurps the place belonging to the Deccan. At the same time we see that some hearsay knowledge of China had made its way into the Roman world before the days of Ptolemy. The two names by which China was first known to Europeans were

Early mention of China. "Seres" or "Serica," and "Sinæ" or "Thin." These two differing names are the records of two different methods of approach to different parts of a vast country, very much as the Northmen called their part of eastern North America "Vinland," while the Spaniards called their part "Florida." The name "Seres" was given to northwestern China by traders who approached it through the highlands of central Asia from Samarcand, while "Sinæ" was the name given to southeastern China by traders who approached it by way of the Indian ocean, and heard of it in India, but never reached it. Apparently no European ships ever reached China before the Portuguese, in 1517.<sup>1</sup> The name "Sinæ" or "Thin" seems to mean the country of the "Tchin" dynasty, which ruled over the whole of China in the second century before Christ, and over a portion of it for a much longer time. The name "Seres," on the other hand, was always associated with the trade in silks, and was known

<sup>1</sup> The Polos sailed back from China to the Persian gulf in 1292-94; see below, p. 232.





CLAUDIUS PTOLEMY'S WORLD, CIR. A. D. 150.

to the Romans in the time of the Emperor Claudius,<sup>1</sup> and somewhat earlier. The Romans in Virgil's time set a high value upon silk, and every scrap of it they had came from China. They knew nothing about the silk-worm, and supposed that the fibres or threads of this beautiful stuff grew upon trees. Of actual intercourse between the Roman and Chinese empires there was no more than is implied in this current of trade, passing through many hands. But that each knew, in a vague way, of the existence of the other, there is no doubt.<sup>2</sup>

In the course of the reign of Justinian, we get references at first hand to India, and coupled withal to a general theory of cosmography. This curious information we have in the book of the monk Cosmas Indicopleustes, written somewhere between A. D. 530 and 550.

*Cosmas Indicopleustes.*

A pleasant book it is, after its kind. In his younger days Cosmas had been a merchant, and in divers voyages had become familiar with the coasts of Ethiopia and the Persian gulf, and had visited India and Ceylon. After becoming a monk at Alexandria, Cosmas wrote his book of Christian

<sup>1</sup> The name "Seres" appears on the map of Pomponius Mela (cir. A. D. 50), while "Sinæ" does not. See below, p. 304.

Jam Tartessiacos quos solverat æquore Titan  
In noctem diffusus equos, jungebat Eois  
Littoribus, primique novo Phaethonte relecti  
Seres lanigeris repetebant vellera lucis.  
Silius Italicus, lib. vi. *ad init.*

<sup>2</sup> For this whole subject see Colonel Sir Henry Yule's *Cathay and the Way Thither*, London, 1866, 2 vols., — a work of profound learning and more delightful than a novel.

geography,<sup>1</sup> maintaining, in opposition to Ptolemy, that the earth is not a sphere, but a rectangular plane forming the floor of the universe; the heavens rise on all four sides about this rectangle, like the four walls of a room, and, at an indefinite height above the floor, these blue walls support a vaulted roof or firmament, in which God dwells with the angels. In the centre of the floor are the inhabited lands of the earth, surrounded on all sides by a great ocean, beyond which, somewhere out in a corner, is the Paradise from which Adam and Eve were expelled. In its general shape, therefore, the universe somewhat resembles the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, or a modern "Saratoga

Shape of the earth, according to Cosmas.

<sup>1</sup> Its title is *Χριστιανῶν βίβλος, ἐρμηνεία εἰς τὴν Οκτάτευχον*, i. e. against Ptolemy's Geography in eight books. The name Cosmas Indicopleustes seems merely to mean "the cosmographer who has sailed to India." He begins his book in a tone of extreme and somewhat unsavory humility: *Ἀνοίγω τὰ μογιλάλα καὶ βραδύγλωσσα χεῖλη ὁ ἁμαρτωλὸς καὶ τάλας ἐγώ* — "I, the sinner and wretch, open my stammering, stuttering lips," etc. — The book has been the occasion of some injudicious excitement within the last half century. Cosmas gave a description of some comparatively recent inscriptions on the peninsula of Sinai, and because he could not find anybody able to read them, he inferred that they must be records of the Israelites on their passage through the desert. (Compare the Dighton rock, above, p. 214.) Whether in the sixth century of grace or in the nineteenth, your unregenerate and unchastened antiquary snaps at conclusions as a drowsy dog does at flies. Some years ago an English clergyman, Charles Forster, started up the nonsense again, and argued that these inscriptions might afford a clue to man's primeval speech! Cf. Bunsen, *Christianity and Mankind*, vol. iii. p. 231; Müller and Donaldson, *History of Greek Literature*, vol. iii. p. 353; Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire from Arcadius to Irene*, vol. ii. p. 177.

trunk." On the northern part of the floor, under the firmament, is a lofty conical mountain, around which the sun, moon, and planets perform their daily revolutions. In the summer the sun takes a turn around the apex of the cone, and is, therefore, hidden only for a short night; but in the winter he travels around the base, which takes longer, and, accordingly, the nights are long. Such is the doctrine drawn from Holy Scripture, says Cosmas, and as for the vain blasphemers who pretend that the earth is a round ball, the Lord hath stultified them for their sins until they impudently prate of Antipodes, where trees grow downward and rain falls upward. As for such nonsense, the worthy Cosmas cannot abide it.

I cite these views of Cosmas because there can be no doubt that they represent beliefs current among the general public until after the time of Columbus,<sup>1</sup> in spite of the deference paid to Ptol-

<sup>1</sup> Such views have their advocates even now. There still lives, I believe, in England, a certain John Hampden, who with dauntless breast maintains that the earth is a circular plane with centre at the north pole and a circumference of nearly 30,000 miles where poor misguided astronomers suppose the south pole to be. The sun moves across the sky at a distance of about 800 miles. From the boundless abyss beyond the southern circumference, with its barrier of icy mountains, came the waters which drowned the antediluvian world; for, as this author quite reasonably observes, "on a globular earth such a deluge would have been physically impossible." Hampden's title is somewhat like that of Cosmas, — *The New Manual of Biblical Cosmography*, London, 1877; and he began in 1876 to publish a periodical called *The Truth-Seeker's Oracle and Scriptural Science Review*. Similar views have been set forth by one Samuel Rowbotham, under the pseudonym of "Parallax," *Zetetic Astronomy. Earth not a Globe. An experimental inquiry into the true figure of the earth, proving it a plane without orbital or axial motion, etc.*, London, 1873; and by a William

emy's views by the learned. Along with these cosmographical speculations, Cosmas shows a wider geographical knowledge of Asia than any earlier writer. He gives a good deal of interesting information about India and Ceylon, and has a fairly correct idea of the position of China, which he calls Tzinista or Chinistan. This land of silk is the remotest of all the Indies, and beyond it "there is neither navigation nor inhabited country. . . . And the Indian philosophers, called Brachmans, tell you that if you were to stretch a straight cord from Tzinista through Persia to the Roman territory, you would just divide the world in halves. And mayhap they are right."<sup>1</sup>

In the fourth and following centuries, Nestorian missionaries were very active in Asia, and not only made multitudes of converts and established metropolitan sees in such places as Kashgar and Herat, but even found their

The  
Nestorians.

Carpenter, *One Hundred Proofs that the Earth is not a Globe*, Baltimore, 1885. There is a very considerable quantity of such literature afloat, the product of a kind of mental aberration that thrives upon paradox. When I was superintendent of the catalogue of Harvard University library, I made the class "Eccentric Literature" under which to group such books, — the lucubrations of circle-squarers, angle-trisectors, inventors of perpetual motion, devisers of recipes for living forever without dying, crazy interpreters of Daniel and the Apocalypse, upsetters of the undulatory theory of light, the Bacon-Shakespeare lunatics, etc.; a dismal procession of long-eared bipeds, with very raucous bray. The late Professor De Morgan devoted a bulky and instructive volume to an account of such people and their crotchets. See his *Budget of Paradoxes*, London, 1872.

<sup>1</sup> Cosmas, ii. 138. Further mention of China was made early in the seventh century by Theophylactus Samocatta, vii. 7. See Yule's *Cathay*, vol. i. pp. xlix., clxviii.

way into China. Their work forms an interesting though melancholy chapter in history, but it does not seem to have done much toward making Asia better known to Europe. As declared heretics, the Nestorians were themselves almost entirely cut off from intercourse with European Christians.

The immediate effect of the sudden rise of the vast Saracen empire, in the seventh and eighth centuries, was to interpose a barrier to the extension of intercourse between Europe and the Far East. Trade between the eastern and western extremities of Asia went on more briskly than ever, but it was for a long time exclusively in Mussulman hands. The mediæval Arabs were bold sailors, and not only visited Sumatra and Java, but made their way to Canton. Upon the southern and middle routes the Arab cities of Cairo and Bagdad became thriving centres of trade; but as Spain and the whole of northern Africa were now Arab countries, most of the trade between east and west was conducted within Mussulman boundaries. Saracen cruisers prowled in the Mediterranean and sorely harassed the Christian coasts. During the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, Europe was more shut in upon herself than ever before or since. In many respects these were especially the dark ages of Europe, — the period of least comfort and least enlightenment since the days of pre-Roman barbarism. But from this general statement Constantinople should be in great measure excepted. The current of mediæval trade through the noble highway of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus

Effects of the  
Saracen  
conquests.

was subject to fluctuations, but it was always great. The city of the Byzantine emperors was before all things a commercial city, like Venice in later days. Until the time of the Crusades Constantinople was the centre of the Levant trade.

Constantino-  
ple in the  
twelfth cen-  
tury.

The great northern route from Asia remained available for commercial intercourse in this direction. Persian and Armenian merchants sent their goods to Batoum, whence they were shipped to Constantinople; and silk was brought from northwestern China by caravan to the Oxus, and forwarded thence by the Caspian sea, the rivers Cyrus and Phasis, and the Euxine sea.<sup>1</sup> When it was visited by Benjamin of Tudela in the twelfth century, Constantinople was undoubtedly the richest and most magnificent city, and the seat of the highest civilization, to be found anywhere upon the globe.

In the days of its strength the Eastern Empire was the staunch bulwark of Christendom against the dangerous assaults of Persian, Saracen, and Turk; alike in prosperity and in calamity, it proved to be the teacher and civilizer of the western world. The events which, at the close of the eleventh century, brought thousands upon thousands of adventurous, keen-witted people from western Europe into this home of wealth and refinement, were the occasion of the most remarkable intellectual awakening that the world had ever witnessed up to that time. The Crusades, in their beginning, were a symptom of

The Crusades.

<sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Historical Disquisition*, p. 93; Pears, *The Fall of Constantinople*, p. 177, — a book of great merit.

the growing energy of western Europe under the ecclesiastical reformation effected by the mighty Hildebrand. They were the military response of Europe to the most threatening, and, as time has proved, the most deadly of all the blows that have ever been aimed at her from Asia. Down to this time the Mahometanism with which Christendom had so long been in conflict was a Mahometanism of civilized peoples. The Arabs and Moors were industrious merchants, agriculturists, and craftsmen; in their society one might meet with learned scholars, refined poets, and profound philosophers. But at the end of the tenth century, Islam happened to make converts of the Turks, a nomad race in the upper status of barbarism, with flocks and herds and patriarchal families. Inspired with the sudden zeal for conquest which has always characterized new converts to Islam, the Turks began to pour down from the plains of central Asia like a deluge upon the Eastern Empire. In 1016 they overwhelmed Armenia, and presently advanced into Asia Minor. Their mode of conquest was peculiarly baleful, for at first they deliberately annihilated the works of civilization in order to prepare the country for their nomadic life; they pulled down cities to put up tents. Though they long ago ceased to be nomads, they have to this day never learned to comprehend civilized life, and they have been simply a blight upon every part of the earth's surface which they have touched. At the beginning of the eleventh century, Asia Minor was one of the most prosperous and highly civilized parts of

Barbarizing  
character of  
Turkish  
conquest.

the world;<sup>1</sup> and the tale of its devastation by the terrible Alp Arslan and the robber chiefs that came after him is one of the most mournful chapters in history. At the end of that century, when the Turks were holding Nicæa and actually had their outposts on the Marmora, it was high time for Christendom to rise *en masse* in self-defence. The idea was worthy of the greatest of popes. Imperfectly and spasmodically as it was carried out, it undoubtedly did more than anything that had ever gone before toward strengthening the wholesome sentiment of a common Christendom among the peoples of western Europe.

General effects of the Crusades.

The Crusades increased the power of the Church, which was equivalent to putting a curb upon the propensities of the robber baron and making labour and traffic more secure. In another way they aided this good work by carrying off the robber baron in large numbers to Egypt and Syria, and killing him there. In this way they did much toward ridding European society of its most turbulent elements; while at the same time they gave fresh development to the spirit of romantic adventure, and connected it with something better than vagrant freebooting.<sup>2</sup> By renewing the long-sus-

<sup>1</sup> "It is difficult for the modern traveller who ventures into the heart of Asia Minor, and finds nothing but rude Kurds and Turkish peasants living among mountains and wild pastures, not connected even by ordinary roads, to imagine the splendour and rich cultivation of this vast country, with its brilliant cities and its teeming population." Mahaffy, *The Greek World under Roman Sway*, London, 1890, p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> The general effects of the Crusades are discussed with much learning and sagacity, by Choiseul-Daillecourt, *De l'Influence des Croisades sur l'état des peuples de l'Europe*, Paris, 1809.

pended intercourse between the minds of western Europe and the Greek culture of Constantinople, they served as a mighty stimulus to intellectual curiosity, and had a large share in bringing about that great thirteenth century renaissance which is forever associated with the names of Giotto and Dante and Roger Bacon.

There can be no doubt that in these ways the Crusades were for our forefathers in Europe the most bracing and stimulating events that occurred in the whole millennium between the complicated disorders of the fifth century and the outburst of maritime discovery in the fifteenth. How far they justified themselves from the military point of view, it is not so easy to say. On the one hand, they had much to do with retarding the progress of the enemy for two hundred years; they overwhelmed the Seljukian Turks so effectually that their successors, the Ottomans, did not become formidable until about 1300, after the last crusading wave had spent its force. On the other hand, the Fourth Crusade, with better oppor-  
The Fourth Crusade.  
 tunities than any of the others for striking a crushing blow at the Moslem, played false to Christendom, and in 1204 captured and despoiled Constantinople in order to gratify Venice's hatred of her commercial rival and superior. It was a sorry piece of business, and one cannot look with unmixed pleasure at the four superb horses that now adorn the front of the church of St. Mark as a trophy of this unhallowed exploit.<sup>1</sup> One can-

<sup>1</sup> They were taken from Chios in the fourth century by the emperor Theodosius, and placed in the hippodrome at Constanti-

not help feeling that but for this colossal treachery, the great city of Constantine, to which our own civilization owes more than can ever be adequately told, might, perhaps, have retained enough strength to withstand the barbarian in 1453, and thus have averted one of the most lamentable catastrophes in the history of mankind.

The general effect of the Crusades upon Oriental commerce was to increase the amount of traffic through Egypt and Syria. Of this lucrative trade Venice got the lion's share, and while she helped support the short-lived Latin dynasty upon the throne at Constantinople, she monopolized a great part of the business of the Black Sea also. But in 1261 Venice's rival, Genoa, allied herself with the Greek emperor, Michael Palæologus, at Nicæa, placed him upon the Byzantine throne, and again cut off Venice from the trade that came through the Bosphorus. From this time forth the mutual hatred between Venice and Genoa "waxed fiercer than ever; no merchant fleet of either state could go to sea without convoy, and wherever their ships met they fought. It was something like the

Rivalry between Venice and Genoa.

nople, whence they were taken by the Venetians in 1204. The opinion that "the results of the Fourth Crusade upon European civilization were altogether disastrous" is ably set forth by Mr. Pears, *The Fall of Constantinople*, London, 1885, and would be difficult to refute. Voltaire might well say in this case, "Ainsi le seul fruit des chrétiens dans leurs barbares croisades fut d'exterminer d'autres chrétiens. Ces croisés, qui ruinaient l'empire, auraient pu, bien plus aisément que tous leurs prédécesseurs, chasser les Turcs de l'Asie." *Essai sur les Mœurs*, tom. ii. p. 158. Voltaire's general view of the Crusades is, however, very superficial.

state of things between Spain and England in the days of Drake.”<sup>1</sup> In the one case as in the other, it was a strife for the mastery of the sea and its commerce. Genoa obtained full control of the Euxine, took possession of the Crimea, and thus acquired a monopoly of the trade from central Asia along the northern route. With the fall of Acre in 1291, and the consequent expulsion of Christians from Syria, Venice lost her hold upon the middle route. But with the pope’s leave<sup>2</sup> she succeeded in making a series of advantageous commercial treaties with the new Mameluke sovereigns of Egypt, and the dealings between the Red Sea and the Adriatic soon came to be prodigious. The Venetians gained control of part of the Peloponnesus, with many islands of the Ægean and eastern Mediterranean. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries their city was the most splendid and luxurious in all Christendom.

Such a development of wealth in Venice and Genoa implies a large producing and consuming area behind them, able to take and pay for the costly products of India and China. Before the end of the thirteenth century the volume of European trade had swelled to great proportions. How full of historic and literary interest are the very names of the centres and leading routes of this trade as it was established in those days, with its outlook upon the

Centres and  
routes of mediæval  
trade.

<sup>1</sup> Yule’s *Marco Polo*, vol. i. p. lxxi.

<sup>2</sup> A papal dispensation was necessary before a commercial treaty could be made with Mahometans. See Leibnitz, *Codex Jur. Gent. Diplom.*, i. 489.

Mediterranean and the distant East ! Far up in the North we see Wisby, on the little isle of Gothland in the Baltic, giving its name to new rules of international law; and the merchants of the famous Hansa towns extending their operations as far as Novgorod in one direction, and in another to the Steelyard in London, where the pound of these honest "Easterlings" was adopted as the "sterling" unit of sound money. Fats and tallows, furs and wax from Russia, iron and copper from Sweden, strong hides and unrivalled wools from England, salt cod and herring (much needed on meagre church fast-days) from the North and Baltic seas, appropriately followed by generous casks of beer from Hamburg, were sent southward in exchange for fine cloths and tapestries, the products of the loom in Ghent and Bruges, in Ulm and Augsburg, with delicious vintages of the Rhine, supple chain armour from Milan, Austrian yew-wood for English long-bows, ivory and spices, pearls and silks from Italy and the Orient. Along the routes from Venice and Florence to Antwerp and Rotterdam we see the progress in wealth and refinement, in artistic and literary productiveness. We see the early schools of music and painting in Italy meet with prompt response in Flanders; in the many-gabled streets of Nuremberg we hear the voice of the Meistersinger, and under the low oaken roof of a Canterbury inn we listen to joyous if sometimes naughty tales erst told in pleasant groves outside of fever-stricken Florence.

With this increase of wealth and culture in central Europe there came a considerable extension of

knowledge and a powerful stimulus to curiosity concerning the remote parts of Asia. The conquering career of Jenghis Khan (1206–1227) had shaken the world to its foundations. In the middle of that century, to adopt Colonel Yule's lively expression, "throughout Asia and eastern Europe, scarcely a dog might bark without Mongol leave, from the borders of Poland and the coast of Cilicia to the Amur and the Yellow Sea." About these portentous Mongols, who had thus in a twinkling overwhelmed China and Russia, and destroyed the Caliphate of Bagdad, there was a refreshing touch of open-minded heathenism. They were barbarians willing to learn. From end to end of Asia the barriers were thrown down. It was a time when Alan chiefs from the Volga served as police in Tunking, and Chinese physicians could be consulted at Tabriz. For about a hundred years China was more accessible than at any period before or since, — more even than to-day; and that country now for the first time became really known to a few Europeans. In the northern provinces of China, shortly before the Mongol deluge, there had reigned a dynasty known as the *Khitai*, and hence China was (and still is) commonly spoken of in central Asia as the country of the *Khitai*. When this name reached European ears it became *Cathay*, the name by which China was best known in Europe during the next four centuries.<sup>1</sup> In 1245, Friar John of Plano Carpini, a friend and disciple of St. Francis, was

Effects of the  
Mongol con-  
quests.

Cathay.

<sup>1</sup> Yule's *Cathay*, vol. i. p. cxvi. ; *Marco Polo*, vol. i. p. xlii.

sent by Pope Innocent IV. on a missionary errand to the Great Khan, and visited him in his camp at Karakorum in the very depths of Mongolia. In 1253 the king of France, St. Louis, sent another Franciscan monk, Willem de Rubruquis, to Karakorum, on a mission of which the purpose is now not clearly understood. Both these Franciscans were men of shrewd and cultivated minds, especially Rubruquis, whose narrative, "in its rich detail, its vivid pictures, its acuteness of observation and strong good sense . . . has few superiors in the whole library of travel."<sup>1</sup> Neither Rubruquis nor Friar John visited China, but they fell in with Chinese folk at Karakorum, and obtained information concerning the geography of eastern Asia far more definite than had ever before been possessed by Europeans. They both describe Cathay as bordering upon an eastern ocean, and this piece of information constituted the first important leap of geographical knowledge to the eastward since the days of Ptolemy, who supposed that beyond the "Seres and Sinæ" lay an unknown land of vast extent, "full of reedy and impenetrable swamps."<sup>2</sup> The

First knowledge of an eastern ocean beyond Cathay.

<sup>1</sup> Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. i. p. cxxx.; cf. Humboldt, *Examen critique*, tom. i. p. 71. The complete original texts of the reports of both monks, with learned notes, may be found in the *Recueil de Voyages et de Mémoires, publié par la Société de Géographie*, Paris, 1839, tom. iv., viz.: *Johannis de Plano Carpini Historia Mongolorum quos nos Tartaros appellamus*, ed. M. d'Avezac; *Itinerarium Willelmi de Rubruk*, ed. F. Michel et T. Wright.

<sup>2</sup> Yule's *Cathay*, vol. i. p. xxxix.; Ptolemy, i. 17. Cf. Bunbury's *History of Ancient Geography*, London, 1883, vol. ii. p. 606.

information gathered by Rubruquis and Friar John indicated that there was an end to the continent of Asia; that, not as a matter of vague speculation, but of positive knowledge, Asia was bounded on the east, just as Europe was bounded on the west, by an ocean.

Here we arrive at a notable landmark in the history of the Discovery of America. Here from the camp of bustling heathen at Karakorum there is brought to Europe the first announcement of a geographical fact from which the poetic mind of Christopher Columbus will hereafter reap a wonderful harvest. This is one among many instances of the way in which, throughout all departments of human thought and action, the glorious thirteenth century was beginning to give shape to the problems of which the happy solution has since made the modern world so different from the ancient.<sup>1</sup> Since there is an ocean east of Cathay and an ocean west of Spain, how natural the inference — and albeit quite wrong, how amazingly fruitful — that these oceans are one and the same, so that by sailing westward from Spain one might go straight to Cathay! The data for such an inference were now all at hand, but it does not appear that any one as yet reasoned from the data to the conclusion, although we find Roger Bacon, in 1267, citing the opinions of Aristotle and other ancient

The data were thus prepared for Columbus;

but as yet nobody reasoned from these data to a practical conclusion.

<sup>1</sup> See my *Beginnings of New England*, chap. i. How richly suggestive to an American is the contemporaneity of Rubruquis and Earl Simon of Leicester!

writers to the effect that the distance by sea from the western shores of Spain to the eastern shores of Asia cannot be so very great.<sup>1</sup> In those days it took a long time for such ideas to get from the heads of philosophers into the heads of men of action; and in the thirteenth century, when Cathay was more accessible by land than at any time before or since, there was no practical necessity felt for a water route thither. Europe still turned her back upon the Atlantic and gazed more intently than ever upon Asia. Stronger and more general grew the interest in Cathay.

In the middle of the thirteenth century, some members of the Polo family, one of the aristocratic families of Venice, had a commercial house at Constantinople. Thence, in 1260, the brothers Nicolò and Maffeo Polo started on a trading journey to the Crimea, whence one opportunity after another for making money and gratifying their curiosity with new sights led them northward and eastward to the Volga, thence into Bokhara, and so on until they reached the court of the Great Khan, in one of the northwestern provinces of Cathay. The reigning sovereign was the famous Kublai Khan, grandson of the all-conquering Jenghis. Kublai was an able and benevolent despot, earnest in the wish to improve the condition of his Mongol kinsmen. He had never before met European gentlemen, and was charmed with the cultivated and polished Venetians. He seemed quite ready to enlist the Roman Church in aid of his civilizing schemes, and entrusted the Polos with

The Polo  
brothers.

<sup>1</sup> Roger Bacon, *Opus Majus*, ed. Jebb, London, 1733, p. 183.

a message to the Pope, asking him for a hundred missionary teachers. The brothers reached Venice in 1269, and found that Pope Clement IV. was dead and there was an interregnum. After two years Gregory X. was elected and received the Khan's message, but could furnish only a couple of Dominican friars, and these men were seized with the dread not uncommonly felt for "Tartareans," and at the last moment refused to go. Nicolò and his brother then set out in the autumn of 1271 to return to China, taking with them Nicolò's son Marco, a lad of seventeen years. From Acre they went by way of Bagdad to Hormuz, at the mouth of the Persian gulf, apparently with the intention of proceeding thence by sea, but for some reason changed their course, and travelled through Kerman, Khorassan, and Balkh, to Kashgar, and thence by way of Yarkand and Khotan, and across the desert of Gobi into northwestern China, where they arrived in the summer of 1275, and found the Khan at Kaipingfu, not far from the northern end of the Great Wall.

It has been said that the failure of Kublai's mission to the Pope led him to apply to the Grand Lama, at Thibet, who responded more efficiently and successfully than Gregory X., so that Buddhism seized the chance which Catholicism failed to grasp. The Venetians, however, lost nothing in the good Khan's esteem. Young Marco began to make himself proficient in speaking and writing several Asiatic languages, and was presently taken into the Khan's

Kublai Khan's  
message to the  
Pope.

Marco Polo  
and his travels  
in Asia.

service. His name is mentioned in the Chinese Annals of 1277 as a newly-appointed commissioner of the privy council.<sup>1</sup> He remained in Kublai's service until 1292, while his father and uncle were gathering wealth in various ways. Marco made many official journeys up and down the Khan's vast dominions, not only in civilized China, but in regions of the heart of Asia seldom visited by Europeans to this day, — "a vast ethnological garden," says Colonel Yule, "of tribes of various race and in every stage of uncivilization." In 1292 a royal bride for the Khan of Persia was to be sent all the way from Peking to Tabriz, and as war that year made some parts of the overland route very unsafe, it was decided to send her by sea. The three Polos had for some time been looking for an opportunity to return to Venice, but Kublai was unwilling to have them go. Now, however, as every Venetian of that day was deemed to be from his very cradle a seasoned seadog, and as the kindly old Mongol sovereign had an inveterate land-lubber's misgivings about ocean voyages, he consented to part with his dear friends, so that he might entrust the precious princess to their care. They sailed from the port of Zaiton (Chinchow) early in 1292, and after long delays on the coasts of Sumatra and Hindustan, in order to avoid unfavourable monsoons, they reached the Persian gulf in 1294. They found that the royal bridegroom, somewhat advanced in years, had died before they started from China;

First recorded  
voyage of Eu-  
ropeans  
around the  
Indo-Chinese  
peninsula,  
1292-94.

<sup>1</sup> Fauthier's *Marco Polo*, p. 361; Yule's *Marco Polo*, p. li.

so the young princess became the bride of his son. After tarrying awhile in Tabriz, the Polos returned, by way of Trebizond and the Bosphorus, to Venice, arriving in 1295.

Return of the  
Polos to Ven-  
ice.

When they got there, says Ramusio, after their absence of four and twenty years, "the same fate befel them as befel Ulysses, who, when he returned to his native Ithaca, was recognized by nobody." Their kinsfolk had long since given them up for dead; and when the three wayworn travellers arrived at the door of their own palace, the middle-aged men now wrinkled graybeards, the stripling now a portly man, all three attired in rather shabby clothes of Tartar cut, and "with a certain indescribable smack of the Tartar about them, both in air and accent," some words of explanation were needed to prove their identity. After a few days they invited a party of old friends to dinner, and bringing forth three shabby coats, ripped open the seams and welts, and began pulling out and tumbling upon the table such treasures of diamonds and emeralds, rubies and sapphires, as could never have been imagined, "which had all been stitched up in those dresses in so artful a fashion that nobody could have suspected the fact." In such wise had they brought home from Cathay their ample earnings; and when it became known about Venice that the three long-lost citizens had come back, "straightway the whole city, gentle and simple, flocked to the house to embrace them, and to make much of them, with every conceivable demonstration of affection and respect."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ramusio, *apud* Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. i. p. xxxvii.

Three years afterward, in 1298, Marco commanded a galley in the great naval battle with the Genoese near Curzola. The Venetians were totally defeated, and Marco was one of the 7,000 prisoners taken to Genoa, where he was kept in durance for about a year. One of his companions

Marco Polo's  
book written  
in prison at  
Genoa, 1299.

in captivity was a certain Rusticiano, of Pisa, who was glad to listen to his descriptions of Asia, and to act as his amanuensis. French was then, at the close of the Crusades, a language as generally understood throughout Europe as later, in the age of Louis XIV.; and Marco's narrative was duly taken down by the worthy Rusticiano in rather lame and shaky French. In the summer of 1299 Marco was set free and returned to Venice, where he seems to have led a quiet life until his death in 1324.

"The Book of Ser Marco Polo concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East" is one of the most famous and important books of the Middle Ages. It contributed more new facts toward a

Its great con-  
tributions to  
geographical  
knowledge.

knowledge of the earth's surface than any book that had ever been written before. Its author was "the first traveller to trace a route across the whole longitude of Asia;" the first to describe China in its vastness, with its immense cities, its manufactures and wealth, and to tell, whether from personal experience or direct hearsay, of Thibet and Burmah, of Siam and Cochin China, of the Indian archipelago, with its islands of spices, of Java and Sumatra, and of the savages of Andaman. He

knew of Japan and the woful defeat of the Mongols there, when they tried to invade the island kingdom in 1281. He gave a description of Hindustan far more complete and characteristic than had ever before been published. From Arab sailors, accustomed to the Indian ocean, he learned something about Zanzibar and Madagascar and the semi-Christian kingdom of Abyssinia. To the northward from Persia he described the country of the Golden Horde, whose khans were then holding Russia in subjection; and he had gathered some accurate information concerning Siberia as far as the country of the Samoyeds, with their dog-sledges and polar bears.<sup>1</sup>

Here was altogether too much geographical knowledge for European ignorance in those days to digest. While Marco's book attracted much attention, its influence upon the progress of geography was slighter than it would have been if addressed to a more enlightened public. Many of its sober statements of fact were received with incredulity. Many of the places described were indistinguishable, in European imagination, from the general multitude of fictitious countries mentioned in fairy-tales or in romances of chivalry. Perhaps no part of Marco's story was so likely to interest his readers as his references

Prester John.

to Prester John. In the course of the twelfth century the notion had somehow gained possession of the European mind that somewhere out in the dim vastness of the Orient there dwelt a mighty Christian potentate, known as John the

<sup>1</sup> Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. i. p. cxxxi.

Presbyter or "Prester."<sup>1</sup> At different times he was identified with various known Asiatic sovereigns. Marco Polo identified him with one Togrul Wang, who was overcome and slain by the mighty Jenghis; but he would not stay dead, any more than the grewsome warlock in Russian nursery lore. The notion of Prester John and his wealthy kingdom could no more be expelled from the European mind in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries than the kindred notion of El Dorado in the sixteenth. The position of this kingdom was shifted about here and there, as far as from Chinese Tartary to Abyssinia and back again, but somewhere or other in people's vague mental picture of the East it was sure to occur. Other remote regions in Asia were peopled with elves and griffins and "one-eyed Arimaspians,"<sup>2</sup> and we may be sure that to Marco's

The "Arimaspians."

<sup>1</sup> "But for to speake of riches and of stones,  
And men and horse, I trow the large wonnes  
Of Prestir John, ne all his tresorie,  
Might not unneth have boght the tenth partie."

Chaucer, *The Flower and the Leaf*, 200.

The fabulous kingdom of Prester John is ably treated in Yule's *Cathay*, vol. i. pp. 174-182; *Marco Polo*, vol. i. p. 204-216. Colonel Yule suspects that its prototype may have been the semi-Christian kingdom of Abyssinia. This is very likely. As for its range, shifted hither and thither as it was, all the way from the upper Nile to the Thian-Shan mountains, we can easily understand this if we remember how an ignorant mind conceives all points distant from its own position as near to one another; i. e. if you are about to start from New York for Arizona, your housemaid will perhaps ask you to deliver a message to her brother in Manitoba. Nowhere more than in the history of geography do we need to keep before us, at every step, the limitations of the untutored mind and its feebleness in grasping the space-relations of remote regions.

<sup>2</sup> These Arimaspians afford an interesting example of the un-

readers these beings were quite as real as the polished citizens of Cambaluc (Peking) or the cannibals of the Andaman islands. From such a chaos of ideas sound geographical knowledge must needs be a slow evolution, and Marco Polo's acquisitions were altogether too far in advance of his age to be readily assimilated.

Nevertheless, in the Catalan map, made in 1375, and now to be seen in the National Library at Paris, there is a thorough-going and not unsuccessful attempt to embody the results of Polo's travels. In the interval of three Other visits to China. quarters of a century since the publication of Marco's narrative, several adventurous travellers had found their way to Cathay. There was Friar

critical statements of travellers at an early time, as well as of their tenacious vitality. The first mention of these mythical people seems to have been made by Greek travellers in Scythia as early as the seventh century before Christ; and they furnished Aristeas of Proconnesus, somewhat later, with the theme of his poem "Arimaspeia," which has perished, all except six verses quoted by Longinus. See Mure's *Literature of Antient Greece*, vol. iv. p. 68. Thence the notion of the Arimaspians seems to have passed to Herodotus (iii. 116; iv. 27) and to Æschylus: —

ὄξυστόμους γὰρ Ζητὸς ἀκραγεῖς κύνας  
γρύπας φύλαξει, τὸν τε μουνῶπα στρατὸν  
Ἄριμασπὸν ἵπποβάμον', οἳ χρυσόρῥυτον  
οἰκοῦσιν ἀμφὶ νῆμα Πλούτωνος πόρου·  
τούτοις σὺ μὴ πέλαζε.

*Prometheus, 802.*

Thence it passed on to Pausanias, i. 24; Pomponius Mela, ii. 1; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, vii. 2; Lucan, *Pharsalia*, iii. 280; and so on to Milton: —

"As when a gryphon through the wilderness,  
With winged course o'er hill or moory dale,  
Pursues the Arimaspan who by stealth  
Had from his wakeful custody purloined  
The guarded gold."

*Paradise Lost, ii. 944.*





the Catalan Map, 1375.

Odoric, of Pordenone, who, during the years 1316–30 visited Hindustan, Sumatra, Java, Cochin China, the Chinese Empire, and Thibet.<sup>1</sup> It was from this worthy monk that the arrant old impostor, “Sir John Mandeville,” stole his descriptions of India and Cathay, seasoning them with yarns from Pliny and Ktesias, and grotesque conceits of his own.<sup>2</sup> Several other missionary friars visited China between 1302 and 1330, and about ten years after the latter date the Florentine merchant, Francesco Pegolotti, wrote a very useful handbook for commercial travellers on the over-

<sup>1</sup> Odoric mentions Juggernaut processions and the burning of widows; in Sumatra he observed cannibalism and community of wives; he found the kingdom of Prester John in Chinese Tartary; “but as regards him,” says wise Odoric, “not one hundredth part is true of what is told of him as if it were undeniable.” Yule’s *Cathay*, vol. i. pp. 79, 85, 146.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel Yule gives a list of fourteen important passages taken bodily from Odoric by Mandeville. *Op. cit.* i. 28. It is very doubtful if that famous book, “Sir John Mandeville’s Travels,” was written by a Mandeville, or by a knight, or even by an Englishman. It seems to have been originally written in French by Jean de Bourgogne, a physician who lived for some years at Liège, and died there somewhere about 1370. He may possibly have been an Englishman named John Burgoyne, who was obliged some years before that date to flee his country for homicide or for some political offence. He had travelled as far as Egypt and Palestine, but no farther. His book is almost entirely cribbed from others, among which may be mentioned the works of Jacques de Vitry, Plano Carpini, Hayton the Armenian, Boldensele’s Itinerary, Albert of Aix’s chronicle of the first crusade, Brunetto Latini’s *Trésor*, Petrus Comestor’s *Historia scholastica*, the *Speculum* of Vincent de Beauvais, etc., etc. It is one of the most wholesale and successful instances of plagiarism and imposture on record. See *The Buke of John Mandevill, from the unique copy (Egerton MS. 1982) in the British Museum. Edited by G. F. Warner.* Westminster, 1889. (Roxburghe Club.)

land route to that country.<sup>1</sup> Between 1338 and 1353 Giovanni Marignolli spent some years at Peking, as papal legate from Benedict XI. to the Great Khan, and also travelled in Ceylon and Hindustan.<sup>2</sup> That seems to have been the last of these journeys to the Far East. In 1368, the people of China rose against the Mongol dynasty and overthrew it. The first emperor of the native Ming dynasty was placed upon the throne, and the Chinese retorted upon their late conquerors by overrunning vast Mongolia and making it Chinese Tartary. The barriers thrown down by the liberal policy of the Mongol sovereigns were now put up again, and no more foreigners were allowed to set foot upon the sacred soil of the Flowery Kingdom.

Overthrow of  
the Mongol  
dynasty, and  
shutting up  
of China.

Thus, for just a century, — from Carpini and Rubruquis to Marignolli, — while China was open to strangers as never before or since, a few Europeans had availed themselves of the opportunity in such wise as to mark the beginning of a new era

<sup>1</sup> One piece of Pegolotti's advice is still useful for travellers in the nineteenth century who visit benighted heathen countries afflicted with robber tariffs: "And don't forget that if you treat the custom-house officers with respect, and make them something of a present in goods or money, they will behave with great civility and always be ready to appraise your wares below their real value." *Op. cit.* ii. 307.

<sup>2</sup> The works of all the writers mentioned in this paragraph, or copious extracts from them, may be found in Yule's *Cathay*, which comprises also the book of the celebrated Ibn Batuta, of Tangier, whose travels, between 1325 and 1355, covered pretty much the whole of Asia except Siberia, besides a journey across Sahara to the river Niger. His book does not seem to have attracted attention in Europe until early in the present century.

in the history of geographical knowledge. Though the discoveries of Marco Polo were as yet but imperfectly appreciated, one point, and that the most significant of all, was thoroughly established. It was shown that the continent of Asia did not extend indefinitely eastward, nor was it bounded and barricaded on that side, as Ptolemy had imagined, by vast impenetrable swamps. On the contrary, its eastern shores were perfectly accessible through an open sea, and half a dozen Europeans in Chinese ships had now actually made the voyage between the coast of China and the Persian gulf. Moreover, some hearsay knowledge — enough to provoke curiosity and greed — had been gained of the existence of numerous islands

First rumours  
of the Mo-  
luca islands  
and Japan.

in that far-off eastern ocean, rich in the spices which from time immemorial had formed such an important element in Mediterranean commerce. News, also, had been brought to Europe of the wonderful island kingdom of Japan (Cipango or Zipangu) lying out in that ocean some hundreds of miles beyond the coast of Cathay. These were rich countries, abounding in objects of lucrative traffic. Under the liberal Mongol rule the Oriental trade had increased enough for Europe to feel in many ways its beneficial effects. Now this trade began to be suddenly and severely checked, and while access to the interior of Asia was cut off, European merchants might begin to reflect upon the value of what they were losing, and to consider if there were any feasible method of recovering it.

It was not merely the shutting up of China by

the first Ming emperor, in 1368, that checked the intercourse between Europe and Asia. A still more baleful obstacle to all such intercourse had lately come upon the scene. In Asia Minor the beastly Turk, whose career had been for two centuries arrested by the Crusades, now reared his head again. The Seljukian had been only scotched, not killed; and now he sprang to life as the Ottoman, with sharper fangs than before. In 1365 the Turks established themselves in the Balkan peninsula, with Adrianople as their capital, and began tightening their coils about the doomed city of Constantine. Each point that they gained meant the strangling of just so much Oriental trade; for, as we have seen, the alliance of Constantinople with Genoa since 1261 had secured to the latter city, and to western Europe, the advantages of the overland routes from Asia, whether through the Volga country or across Armenia. When at length, in 1453, the Turks took Constantinople, the splendid commercial career of Genoa was cut with the shears of Atropos. At the same time, as their power was rapidly extending over Syria and down toward Egypt, threatening the overthrow of the liberal Mameluke dynasty there, the commercial prosperity of Venice also was seriously imperilled. Moreover, as Turkish corsairs began to swarm in the eastern waters of the Mediterranean, the voyage became more and more unsafe for Christian vessels. It was thus, while the volume of trade with Asia was, in the natural course of things, swelling year by year,

The accustomed routes of Oriental trade cut off by the Ottoman Turks.

that its accustomed routes were being ruthlessly cut off. It was fast becoming necessary to consider whether there might not be other practicable routes to "the Indies" than those which had from time immemorial been followed. Could there be such a thing as an "outside route" to that land of promise? A more startling question has seldom been propounded; for it involved a radical departure from the grooves in which the human mind had been running ever since the days of Solomon. Two generations of men lived and died while this question was taking shape, and all that time Cathay and India and the islands of Spices were objects of increasing desire, clothed by eager fancy with all manner of charms and riches. The more effectually the eastern Mediterranean was closed, the stronger grew the impulse to venture upon unknown paths in order to realize the vague but glorious hopes that began to cluster about these remote countries. Such an era of romantic enterprise as was thus ushered in, the world has never seen before or since. It was equally remarkable as an era of discipline in scientific thinking. In the maritime ventures of unparalleled boldness now to be described, the human mind was groping toward the era of enormous extensions of knowledge in space and time represented by the names of Newton and Darwin. It was learning the right way of putting its trust in the Unseen.

Necessity for  
finding an  
"outside  
route to the  
Indies."

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE SEARCH FOR THE INDIES.

#### *EASTWARD OR PORTUGUESE ROUTE.*

As it dawned upon men's minds that to find some oceanic route from Europe to the remote shores of Asia was eminently desirable, the first attempt would naturally be to see what could be done by sailing down the western coast of Africa, and ascertaining whether that continent could be circumnavigated. It was also quite in the natural order of things that this first attempt should be made by the Portuguese.

Question as to whether Asia could be reached by sailing around Africa.

In the general history of the Middle Ages the Spanish peninsula had been to some extent cut off from the main currents of thought and feeling which actuated the rest of Europe. Its people had never joined the other Christian nations in the Crusades, for the good reason that they always had quite enough to occupy them in their own domestic struggle with the Moors. From the throes of this prolonged warfare Portugal emerged somewhat sooner than the Spanish kingdoms, and thus had somewhat earlier a surplus of energy released for work of another sort. It was not strange that the Portuguese should be the first people since the old Northmen to engage in dis-

tant maritime adventure upon a grand scale. Nor was it strange that Portuguese seamanship should at first have thriven upon naval warfare with Mussulmans. It was in attempting to suppress the intolerable nuisance of Moorish piracy that Portuguese ships became accustomed to sail a little way down the west coast of Africa; and such voyages, begun for military purposes, were kept up in the interests of commerce, and presently served as a mighty stimulus to geographical curiosity. We have now to consider at some length how grave was the problem that came up for immediate solution.

With regard to the circumnavigability of Africa two opposite opinions were maintained by the ancient Greek and Latin writers whose authority the men of the Middle Ages were wont to quote as decisive of every vexed question. The old Homeric notion of an ocean encompassing the terrestrial world, although mentioned with doubt by Herodotus,<sup>1</sup> continued to survive after the globular form of the earth had come to be generally maintained by ancient geographers. The greatest of these geographers, Eratosthenes, correctly assumed that the Indian ocean was continuous with the Atlantic,<sup>2</sup> and that Africa could be circumnavigated, just as he incor-

Views of  
Eratosthenes,  
B. C. 276-196.

<sup>1</sup> Τὸν δὲ Ὠκεανὸν λόγῳ μὲν λέγουσι ἀπ' ἡλίου ἀνατολῆων ἀρχόμενον γῆν περὶ πᾶσαν ῥέειν, ἔργῳ δὲ οὐκ ἀποδεικνύσι. Herodotus, iv. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Καὶ γὰρ κατ' αὐτὸν Ἐρατοσθένη τὴν ἐκτὸς θάλατταν ἅπασαν σύρρονιν εἶναι, ὥστε καὶ τὴν Ἑσπέριον καὶ τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν θάλατταν μίαν εἶναι. Strabo, i. 3, § 13.

rectly assumed that the Caspian sea was a huge gulf communicating with a northern ocean, by which it would be possible to sail around the continent of Asia as he imagined it.<sup>1</sup> A similar opinion as to Africa was held by Posidonius and by Strabo.<sup>2</sup> It was called in question, however, by Polybius,<sup>3</sup> and was flatly denied by the great astronomer Hipparchus, who thought that certain observations on the tides, reported by Seleucus of Babylon, proved that there could be no connection between the Atlantic and Indian oceans.<sup>4</sup> Claudius Ptolemy, writing in the second century after Christ, followed the opinion of Hipparchus, and carried to an extreme the reaction against Eratosthenes. By Ptolemy's time the Caspian had been proved to be an inland sea, and it was evident that Asia extended much farther to the north and east than had once been supposed. This seems to have discredited in his mind the whole conception of outside oceans, and he not only gave an indefinite northward and eastward extension to Asia and an indefinite southern extension to Africa, but brought these two continents together far to the southeast, thus making the Indian ocean a landlocked sea.<sup>5</sup>

These views of Hipparchus and Ptolemy took

<sup>1</sup> Bunbury, *History of Ancient Geography*, vol. i. p. 644.

<sup>2</sup> Strabo, ii. 3, § 4; xvii. 3, § 1.

<sup>3</sup> Καθάπερ δὲ καὶ τῆς Ἀσίας καὶ τῆς Λιβύης, καθὼς συνάπτουσιν ἀλλήλαις περὶ τὴν Αἰθιοπίαν, οὐδεὶς ἔχει λέγειν ἀπρεκῶς ἕως τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς καιρῶν, πότερον ἡπειρὸς ἐστὶ κατὰ τὸ συνεχὲς τὰ πρὸς τὴν μεσημβρίαν, ἢ θαλάττῃ περιέχεται. Polybius, iii. 38.

<sup>4</sup> Bunbury, *op. cit.* vol. ii. p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> See the map of Ptolemy's world, above, p. 264.

Opposing  
theory of  
Ptolemy, cir.  
A. D. 150.

no heed of the story told to Herodotus of the circumnavigation of Africa by a Phœnician squadron at some time during the reign of Necho in Egypt (610–595 B. C.).<sup>1</sup> The Phœnician ships were said to have sailed from the Red Sea and to have returned through the Mediterranean in the third year after starting. In each of the two autumn seasons they stopped and sowed grain and waited for it to ripen, which in southern Africa would require ten or twelve weeks.<sup>2</sup> On their return to Egypt they declared (“I for my part do not believe them,” says Herodotus, “but perhaps others may”) that in thus sailing from east to west around Africa they had the sun upon their right hand. About this alleged voyage there has been a good deal of controversy.<sup>3</sup> No other expedition in any wise com-

Story of the  
Phœnician  
voyage, in the  
time of Necho.

<sup>1</sup> Ptolemy expressly declares that the equatorial regions had never been visited by people from the northern hemisphere: *Τίνες δέ εἰσιν αἱ οἰκήσεις οὐκ ἂν ἔχοιμεν πεπεισμένως εἰπεῖν. Ἀτ-  
ριπτοι γάρ εἰσι μέχρι τοῦ δεῦρο τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς οἰκουμένης,  
καὶ εἰκασίαν μᾶλλον ἂν τις ἢ ἱστορίαν ἡγήσαιντο τὰ λεγόμενα περὶ  
αὐτῶν.* *Syntaxis*, ii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, vol. iii. p. 29, note 8.

<sup>3</sup> The story is discredited by Mannert, *Geographie der Griechen und Römer*, bd. i. pp. 19–26; Gossellin, *Recherches sur la géographie des Anciens*, tom. i. p. 149; Lewis, *Astronomy of the Ancients*, pp. 508–515; Vincent, *Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients in the Indian Ocean*, vol. i. pp. 303–311, vol. ii. pp. 13–15; Leake, *Disputed Questions of Ancient Geography*, pp. 1–8. It is defended by Heeren, *Ideen über die Politik, den Verkehr*, etc., 3e Aufl., Göttingen, 1815, bd. i. abth. ii. pp. 87–93; Rennell, *Geography of Herodotus*, pp. 672–714; Grote, *History of Greece*, vol. iii. pp. 377–385. The case is ably presented in Bunbury's *History of Ancient Geography*, vol. i. pp. 289–296, where it is concluded that the story “cannot be disproved or pronounced to be absolutely impossible; but the difficulties and improbabilities attend-

parable to it for length and difficulty can be cited from ancient history, and a critical scholar is inclined to look with suspicion upon all such accounts of unique and isolated events. As we have not the details of the story, it is impossible to give it a satisfactory critical examination. The circumstance most likely to convince us of its truth is precisely that which dear old Herodotus deemed incredible. The position of the sun, to the north of the mariners, is something that could hardly have been imagined by people familiar only with the northern hemisphere. It is therefore almost certain that Necho's expedition sailed beyond the equator.<sup>1</sup> But that is as far as inference can properly carry us; for our experience of the uncritical temper of ancient narrators is enough to suggest that such

ing it are so great that they cannot reasonably be set aside without better evidence than the mere statement of Herodotus, upon the authority of unknown informants." Mr. Bunbury (vol. i. p. 317) says that he has reasons for believing that Mr. Grote afterwards changed his opinion and came to agree with Sir George Lewis.

<sup>1</sup> In reading the learned works of Sir George Cornwall Lewis, one is often reminded of what Sainte-Beuve somewhere says of the great scholar Letronne, when he had spent the hour of his lecture in demolishing some pretty or popular belief: "Il se frota les mains et s'en alla bien content." When it came to ancient history, Sir George was undeniably fond of "the everlasting No." In the present case his skepticism seems on the whole well-judged, but some of his arguments savour of undue haste toward a negative conclusion. He thus strangely forgets that what we call autumn is springtime in the southern hemisphere (*Astronomy of the Ancients*, p. 511). His argument that the time alleged was insufficient for the voyage is fully met by Major Rennell, who has shown that the time was amply sufficient, and that the direction of winds and ocean currents would make the voyage around southern Africa from east to west much easier than from west to east.

an achievement might easily be magnified by rumour into the story told, more than a century after the event, to Herodotus. The data are too slight to justify us in any dogmatic opinion. One thing, however, is clear. Even if the circumnavigation was effected, — which, on the whole, seems improbable, — it remained quite barren of results. It produced no abiding impression upon men's minds<sup>1</sup> and added nothing to geographical knowledge. The veil of mystery was not lifted from southern Africa. The story was doubted by Strabo and Posidonius, and passed unheeded, as we have seen, by Hipparchus and Ptolemy.

Of Phœnician and other voyages along the Atlantic coast of Africa we have much more detailed and trustworthy information. As early as the twelfth century before Christ traders from Tyre had founded Cadiz (Gades),<sup>2</sup> and at a later date the same hardy people seem to have made the beginnings of Lisbon (Olisipo). From such advanced stations Tyrian and Carthaginian ships sometimes found their way northward as far as Cornwall, and in the opposite direction fishing voyages were made along the African coast. The most remarkable undertaking in this quarter was the famous voyage of the Carthaginian commander Hanno, whose own brief but interesting account

Voyage of  
Hanno.

<sup>1</sup> "No trace of it could be found in the Alexandrian library, either by Eratosthenes in the third, or by Marinus of Tyre in the second, century before Christ, although both of them were diligent examiners of ancient records." Major, *Prince Henry the Navigator*, p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Rawlinson's *History of Phœnicia*, pp. 105, 418; Pseudo-Aristotle, *Mirab. Auscult.*, 146; Velleius Patereulus, i. 2, § 6.

of it has been preserved.<sup>1</sup> This expedition consisted of sixty penteconters (fifty-oared ships), and its chief purpose was colonization. Upon the Mauritanian coast seven small trading stations were founded, one of which — Kerne, at the mouth of the Rio d' Ouro<sup>2</sup> — existed for a long time. From this point Hanno made two voyages of exploration, the second of which carried him as far as Sierra Leone and the neighbouring Sherboro island, where he found "wild men and women covered with hair," called by the interpreters "gorillas."<sup>3</sup> At that point the ships turned back, apparently for want of provisions.

No other expedition in ancient times is known to have proceeded so far south as Sierra Leone. Two other voyages upon this Atlantic coast are mentioned, but without definite details. The one was that of Sataspes (about 470 B. C.), narrated

<sup>1</sup> Hanno, *Periplus*, in Müller, *Geographi Græci Minores*, tom. i. pp. 1-14. Of two or three commanders named Hanno it is uncertain which was the one who led this expedition, and thus its date has been variously assigned from 570 to 470 B. C.

<sup>2</sup> For the determination of these localities see Bunbury, *op. cit.* vol. i. pp. 318-335. There is an interesting Spanish description of Hanno's expedition in Mariana, *Historia de España*, Madrid, 1783, tom. i. pp. 89-93.

<sup>3</sup> The sailors pursued them, but did not capture any of the males, who scrambled up the cliffs out of their reach. They captured three females, who bit and scratched so fiercely that it was useless to try to take them away. So they killed them and took their skins home to Carthage. *Periplus*, xviii. According to Pliny (*Hist. Nat.*, vi. 36) these skins were hung up as a votive offering in the temple of Juno (i. e. Astarte or Ashtoreth: see Apuleius, *Metamorph.*, xi. 257; Gesenius, *Monumenta Phœnic.*, p. 168), where they might have been seen at any time before the Romans destroyed the city.

by Herodotus, who merely tells us that a coast was reached where undersized men, clad in palm-leaf garments, fled to the hills at sight of the strange visitors.<sup>1</sup> The other was that of Eudoxus (about 85 B. C.), related by Posidonius, the friend and teacher of Cicero. The story is that this Eudoxus, in a voyage upon the east coast of Africa, having a philological turn of mind, wrote down the words of some of the natives whom he met here and there along the shore. He also picked up a ship's prow in the form of a horse's head, and upon his return to Alexandria some merchants professed to recognize it as belonging to a ship of Cadiz. Eudoxus thereupon concluded that Africa was circumnavigable, and presently sailed through the Mediterranean and out upon the Atlantic. Somewhere upon the coast of Mauritania he found natives who used some words of similar sound to those which he had written down when visiting the eastern coast, whence he concluded that they were people of the same race. At this point he turned back, and the sequel of the story was unknown to Posidonius.<sup>2</sup>

It is worthy of note that both Pliny and Pomponius Mela, quoting Cornelius Nepos as their authority, speak of Eudoxus as having circumnavigated Africa from the Red Sea to Cadiz; and Pliny, moreover, tells us that Hanno sailed around that continent as far as Arabia,<sup>3</sup>—a statement which is

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus, iv. 43.

<sup>2</sup> The story is preserved by Strabo, ii. 3, §§ 4, 5, who rejects it with a vehemence for which no adequate reason is assigned.

<sup>3</sup> Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, ii. 67; Mela, *De Situ Orbis*, iii. 9.

clearly false. These examples show how stories grow when carelessly and uncritically repeated, and they strongly tend to confirm the doubt with which one is inclined to regard the tale of Necho's sailors above mentioned. In truth, the island of Gorillas, discovered by Hanno, was doubtless the most southerly point on that coast reached by navigators in ancient times. Of the islands in the western ocean the Carthaginians certainly knew the Canaries (where they have left undoubted inscriptions), probably also the Madeiras, and possibly the Cape Verde group.<sup>1</sup>

The extent of the knowledge which the ancients thus had of western Africa is well illustrated in the map representing the geographical theories of Pomponius Mela, whose book was written about A. D. 50. Of the eastern coast and the interior

<sup>1</sup> After the civil war of Sertorius (B. C. 80-72), the Romans became acquainted with the Canaries, which, because of their luxuriant vegetation and soft climate, were identified with the Elysium described by Homer, and were commonly known as the Fortunate islands. "Contra Fortunatæ Insulæ abundant sua sponte genitis, et subinde aliis super aliis innascentibus nihil sollicitos alunt, beatius quam aliæ urbes exultæ." Mela, iii. 10.

Ἄλλὰ σ' εἰς Ἡλύσιον πεδῖον καὶ πείρατα γαίης  
ἀθάνατοι πέμψουσιν, ὅθι ξανθὸς Ῥαδάμανθους,  
τῇ περ ῥήϊστη βιοτῇ πέλει ἀνθρώποισιν·  
οὐ νικητὸς, οὐτ' ἄρ' χειμῶν πολλὸς οὔτε ποτ' ὄμβρος,  
ἀλλ' αἰεὶ Ζεφύροιο λιγὺ πνείοντας ἀήτας  
Ὠκεανὸς ἀνίσχιν ἀναψύχειν ἀνθρώπους.

*Odyssey*, iv. 563.

Since Horace's time (*Epod.* vi. 41-66) the Canary islands have been a favourite theme for poets. It was here that Tasso placed the loves of Rinaldo and Armida, in the delicious garden where

Vezzosi augelli infra le verde fronde  
Temprano a prova lascivette note.  
Mormora l' aura, e fa le foglie e l' onde  
Garrir, che variamente ella percote.

*Gerusalemme Liberata*, xvi. 12.



theory, in contrast with the "continental" theory of Ptolemy. In the unvisited regions on all sides of the known world Eratosthenes imagined vast oceans, Ptolemy imagined vast deserts or impenetrable swamps. The former doctrine was of course much more favourable to maritime enterprise than the latter. The works of Ptolemy exercised over the mediæval mind an almost despotic sway, which, in spite of their many merits, was in some respects a hindrance to progress; so that, inasmuch as the splendid work of Strabo, the most eminent follower of Eratosthenes, was unknown to mediæval Europe until about 1450, it was fortunate that the Latin treatise of Mela was generally read and highly esteemed. People in those days were such uncritical readers that very likely the antagonism between Ptolemy and Mela may have failed to excite comment,<sup>1</sup> especially in view of the lack of suitable maps such as emphasize that antagonism to our modern minds. But in the fifteenth century, when men were getting their first inklings of critical scholarship, and when the practical question of an ocean voyage to Asia was pressing for solution, such a point could no longer fail to attract attention; and it happened fortunately that the wet theory, no less than the dry theory, had a popular advocate among those classical authors to whose authority so much deference was paid.

<sup>1</sup> Just as our grandfathers used to read the Bible without noticing such points as the divergences between the books of Kings and Chronicles, the contradictions between the genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke, the radically different theories of Christ's personality and career in the Fourth Gospel as compared with the three Synoptics, etc.

If the Portuguese mariners of the generation before Columbus had acquiesced in Ptolemy's views as final, they surely would not have devoted their energies to the task of circumnavigating Africa. But there were yet other theoretical or fanciful obstacles in the way. When you look at a modern map of the world, the "five zones" may seem like a mere graphic device for marking conveniently the relations of different regions to the solar source of heat; but before the great Portuguese voyages and the epoch-making third voyage of Vespuceius, to be described hereafter, a discouraging doctrine was entertained with regard to these zones. Ancient travellers in Scythia and voyagers to "Thule" — which in Ptolemy's scheme perhaps meant the Shetland isles<sup>1</sup> — had learned something of Arctic phenomena. The long winter nights,<sup>2</sup> the snow and ice, and the bitter winds, made a deep impression upon visitors from the Mediterranean;<sup>3</sup> and

Ancient theory of the five zones.

<sup>1</sup> Bunbury, *op. cit.* vol. ii. pp. 492, 527. The name is used in different geographical senses by various ancient writers, as is well shown in Lewis's *Astronomy of the Ancients*, pp. 467-481.

<sup>2</sup> The Romans, at least by the first century A. D., knew also of the shortness of northern nights in summer.

Arma quidem ultra  
Littora Invernæ promovimus, et modo captas  
Orcadas, ac minima contentos nocte Britannos.

Juvenal, ii. 159.

See also Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, iv. 30; Martianus Capella, vi. 595; Achilles Tatius, xxxv.

<sup>3</sup> The reader will remember Virgil's magnificent description of a Scythian winter (*Georg.*, iii. 352): —

Illic clausa tenent stabulis armenta; neque ullæ  
Aut herbæ campo apparent, aut arbore frondes:  
Sed jacet aggeribus niveis informis, et alto  
Terra gelu late, septemque assurgit in ulnas;

when such facts were contrasted with the scorching blasts that came from Sahara, the resulting theory was undeniably plausible. In the extreme north the ocean must be frozen and the country uninhabitable by reason of the cold; contrariwise, in the far south the ocean must be boiling hot and the country inhabitable only by gnomes and salamanders. Applying these ideas to the conception of the earth as a sphere, Pomponius Mela tells us that the surface of the sphere is divided into five zones, of which only two are fit to support human life. About each pole stretches a dead and frozen zone; the southern and northern hemispheres have each a temperate zone, with the same changes of seasons, but not occurring at the

Semper hiems, semper spirantes frigora Cauri.  
 Tum Sol pallentes haud unquam discutit umbras;  
 Nec cum invectus equis altum petit æthera, nec cum  
 Præcipitem Oceani rubro lavit æquore currum.  
 Concresecunt subitæ currenti in flumine crustæ;  
 Undaque jam tergo ferratos sustinet orbes,  
 Puppibus illa prius patulis, nunc hospita plaustris,  
 Æraque dissiliunt vulgo, vestesque rigescunt  
 Indutæ, cæduntque securibus humida vina  
 Et totæ solidam in glaciem vertère lacunæ,  
 Stiriaque impexis induruit horrida barbis.  
 Interea toto non secius aëre ningit;  
 Intereunt pecudes; stant circumfusa pruinis  
 Corpora magna boum; confertoque agmine cervi  
 Torpent mole nova, et summis vix cornibus exstant.  
 . . . . .  
 Ipsi in defossis specubus, secura sub alta  
 Otia agunt terra, congestaque robora, totasque  
 Advolvere focis ulmos, ignique dedere.  
 Hic noctem ludo ducunt, et pocula læti  
 Fermento atque acidis imitantur vitea sorbis.  
 Talis Hyperboreo Septem subjecta trioni  
 Gens effræna virûm Rhipæo tunditur Euro,  
 Et pecudum fulvis velantur corpora sætis.

The Roman conception of the situation of these "Hyperboreans" and of the Rhipæan mountains may be seen in the map of Mela's world.

same (but opposite) times; the north temperate zone is the seat of the *Œcumene* (οἰκουμένη), or Inhabited World; the south temperate zone is also inhabited by the *Antichthones* or *Antipodes*, but about these people we know nothing, because between us and them there intervenes the burning zone, which it is impossible to cross.<sup>1</sup>

This notion of an antipodal world in the southern hemisphere will have especial interest for us when we come to deal with the voyages of Vesputius. The idea seems to have originated in a guess of Hipparchus that Taprobane — the island of Ceylon, about which the most absurd reports were brought to Europe — might be the beginning of another world. This is very probable, says Mela, with delightful *naïveté*, because Taprobane is inhabited, and still we do not know of anybody who has ever made the tour of it.<sup>2</sup> Mela's con-

<sup>1</sup> "Huic medio terra sublimis cingitur undique mari: eodemque in duo latera, quæ hemisphæria nominantur, ab oriente divisa ad occasum, zonis quinque distinguitur. Mediam æstus infestat, frigus ultimas: reliquæ habitabiles paria agunt anni tempora, verum non pariter. Antichthones alteram, nos alteram incolimus. Illius situ ab ardorem intercedentis plagæ incognito, hujus dicendus est," etc. *De Situ Orbis*, i. 1. A similar theory is set forth by Ovid (*Metamorph.*, i. 45), and by Virgil (*Georg.*, i. 233): —

Quinque tenent cælum zonæ; quarum una corusco  
Semper Sole rubens, et torrida semper ab igni;  
Quam circum extremæ dextra lævaque trahuntur,  
Cærulea glacie concretæ atque imbris atris.  
Has inter mediamque, duæ mortalibus ægris  
Munere concessæ Divûm; et via secta per ambas,  
Obliquus qua se signorum verteret ordo.

<sup>2</sup> "Taprobane aut grandis admodum insula aut prima pars orbis alterius Hipparcho dicitur; sed quia habitata, nec quisquam circummeasse traditur, prope verum est." *De Situ Orbis*, iii. 7.

temporary, the elder Pliny, declares that Taprobane "has long been regarded" as part of another world, the name of which is Antichthon, or Opposite-Earth;<sup>1</sup> at the same time Pliny vouchsafes three closely-printed pages of information about this mysterious country. Throughout the Middle Ages the conception of some sort of an antipodal inhabited world was vaguely entertained by writers here and there, but many of the clergy condemned it as implying the existence of people cut off from the knowledge of the gospel and not included in the plan of salvation.

Curious notions about Ceylon.

As to the possibility of crossing the torrid zone, opinion was not unanimous. Greek explorers from Alexandria (cir. B. C. 100) seem to have gone far up the Nile toward the equator, and the astronomer Geminus quotes their testimony in proof of his opinion that the torrid zone is inhabitable.<sup>2</sup> Panætius, the friend of the younger Scipio Africanus, had already expressed a similar opinion. But the flaming theory prevailed. Macrobius, writing about six hundred years later, maintained that the southernmost limit of the habitable earth was 850 miles south of Syene, which lies just under the tropic of Cancer.<sup>3</sup> Beyond this point no man could go without danger from the

<sup>1</sup> "Taprobanen alterum orbem terrarum esse, diu existimatum est, Antichthonum appellatione." *Hist. Nat.*, vi. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Geminus, *Isagoge*, cap. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Macrobius, *Somnium Scipionis*, ii. 8. Strabo (ii. 5, §§ 7, 8) sets the southern boundary of the Inhabited World 800 miles south of Syene, and the northern boundary at the north of Ireland.

fiery atmosphere. Beyond some such latitude on the ocean no ship could venture without risk of being engulfed in some steam-  
 The fiery zone. whirlpool.<sup>1</sup> Such was the common belief before the great voyages of the Portuguese.

Besides this dread of the burning zone, another fanciful obstacle beset the mariner who proposed to undertake a long voyage upon the outer ocean. It had been observed that a ship which disappears in the offing seems to be going downhill; and many people feared that if they should happen thus to descend too far away from the land they could  
 Going down-hill. never get back again. Men accustomed to inland sea travel did not feel this dread within the regions of which they had experience, but it assailed them whenever they thought of braving the mighty waters outside.<sup>2</sup> Thus the

<sup>1</sup> Another notion, less easily explicable and less commonly entertained, but interesting for its literary associations, was the notion of a mountain of loadstone in the Indian ocean, which prevented access to the torrid zone by drawing the nails from ships and thus wrecking them. This imaginary mountain, with some variations in the description, is made to carry a serious geographical argument by the astrologer Pietro d' Abano, in his book *Conciliator Differentiarum*, written about 1312. (See Major, *Prince Henry the Navigator*, p. 100.) It plays an important part in one of the finest tales in the *Arabian Nights*, — the story of the "Third Royal Mendicant."

<sup>2</sup> Ferdinand Columbus tells us that this objection was urged against the Portuguese captains and afterwards against his father: "E altri di ciò quasi così disputavano, come già i Portoghesi intorno al navigare in Guinea; dicendo che, se si allargasse alcuno a far cammino diritto al occidente, come l' Ammiraglio diceva, non potrebbe poi tornare in Ispagna per la rotondità della sfera; tenendo per certissime, che qualunque uscisse del emisferio conosciuto da Tolomeo, anderebbe in giù, e poi gli sarebbe impossibile dar la volta; e affermando che ciò sarebbe quasi uno

master mariner, in the Middle Ages, might contemplate the possible chance of being drawn by force of gravity into the fiery gulf, should he rashly approach too near; and in such misgivings he would be confirmed by Virgil, who was as much read then as he is to-day and esteemed an authority, withal, on scientific questions; for according to Virgil the Inhabited World descends toward the equator and has its apex in the extreme north.<sup>1</sup>

To such notions as these, which were supposed to have some sort of scientific basis, we must add the wild superstitious fancies that clustered about all remote and unvisited corners of the world. In maps made in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in such places as we should label "Unexplored Region," there were commonly depicted uncouth shapes of "Gorgons and Hydras and Chi-

ascendere all' insù di un monte. Il che non potrebbero fare i navigli con grandissimo vento." *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, Venice, 1571, cap. xii. The same thing is told, in almost the same words, by Las Casas, since both writers followed the same original documents: "Afidian mas, que quien navegase por vía derecha la vuelta del poniente, como el Cristóbal Colon proferia, no podria despues volver, suponiendo que el mundo era redondo y yendo hácia el occidente iban cuesta abajo, y saliendo del hemisferio que Ptolomeo escribiò, á la vuelta érales necesario subir cuesta arriba, lo que los navíos era imposible hacer." The gentle but keen sarcasm that follows is very characteristic of Las Casas: "Esta era gentil y profunda razon, y señal de haber bien el negocio entendido!" *Historia de las Indias*, tom. i. p. 230.

<sup>1</sup> Mundus, ut ad Scythiam Rhipeasque arduus arces  
Consurgit, premitur Libyæ devexus in austros.  
Hic vertex nobis semper sublimis; at illum  
Sub pedibus Styx atra videt Manesque profundì.

*Georg.*, i. 240.

For an account of the deference paid to Virgil in the Middle Ages, as well as the grotesque fancies about him, see Tunison's *Master Virgil*, 2d ed., Cincinnati, 1890.

mæras dire," furnishing eloquent testimony to the feelings with which the unknown was regarded.

Superstitious fancies. The barren wastes of the Sea of Darkness awakened a shuddering dread like that with which children shrink from the gloom of a cellar. When we remember all these things, and consider how the intelligent purpose which urged the commanders onward was scarcely within the comprehension of their ignorant and refractory crews, we can begin to form some idea of the difficulties that confronted the brave mariners who first sought an ocean route to the far-off shores of Cathay.

Less formidable than these obstacles based on fallacious reasoning or superstitious whim were those that were furnished by the clumsiness of the ships and the crudeness of the appliances for navigation. As already observed, the Spanish and Portuguese caravels of the fifteenth century were Clumsiness of the caravels. less swift and manageable craft than the Norwegian "dragons" of the tenth. Mere yachts in size we should call them, but far from yachtlike in shape or nimbleness. With their length seldom more than thrice their width of beam, with narrow tower-like poops, with broad-shouldered bows and bowsprit weighed down with spritsail yards, and with no canvas higher than a topsail, these clumsy caravels could make but little progress against headwinds, and the amount of tacking and beating to and fro was sometimes enough to quadruple the length of the voyage. For want of metallic sheathing below the waterline the ship was liable to be sunk by the terrible

worm which, in Hakluyt's phrase, "many times pearceth and eateth through the strongest oake." For want of vegetable food in the larder, or anything save the driest of bread and beef stiffened with brine, the sailors were sure to be attacked by scurvy, and in a very long voyage the crew was deemed fortunate that did not lose half its number from that foul disease. Often in traversing unknown seas the sturdy men who survived all other perils were brought face to face with starvation when they had ventured too far without turning back.<sup>1</sup> We need not wonder that the first steps in oceanic discovery were slow and painful.

Famine and  
scurvy.

First among the instruments without which systematic ocean navigation would have been impossible, the magnetic compass had been introduced into southern Europe and was used by Biscayan and Catalan sailors before the end of the twelfth century.<sup>2</sup> Parties of Crusaders had learned the virtues of the suspended needle from the Arabs, who are said to have got their knowledge indirectly from China in the course of their eastern voyages.<sup>3</sup> It seems to have been

The mariner's  
compass.

<sup>1</sup> Or simply because a wrong course happened to be taken, through ignorance of atmospheric conditions, as in the second homeward and third outward voyages of Columbus. See below, pp. 485, 490.

<sup>2</sup> Navarrete, *Discurso historico sobre los progresos del arte de navegar en España*, p. 28; see also Raymond Lully's treatise, *Libro felix, ó Maravillas del mundo* (A. D. 1286).

<sup>3</sup> See Humboldt's *Kosmos*, bd. i. p. 294; Klaproth, *Lettre à M. de Humboldt sur l'invention de la boussole*, pp. 41, 45, 50, 66, 79, 90. But some of Klaproth's conclusions have been doubted: "Pour la boussole, rien ne prouve que les Chinois l'aient em-

at Amalfi that the needle was first enclosed in a box and connected with a graduated compass-card. Apparently it had not come into general use in the middle of the thirteenth century, for in 1258 the famous Brunetto Latini, afterwards tutor of Dante, made a visit to Roger Bacon, of which he gives a description in a letter to his friend the poet Guido Cavalcanti: "The Parliament being summoned to assemble at Oxford, I did not fail to see Friar Bacon as soon as I arrived, and (among other things) he showed me a black ugly stone called a magnet, which has the surprising property of drawing iron to it; and upon which, if a needle be rubbed, and afterwards fastened to a straw so that it shall swim upon water, the needle will instantly turn toward the Pole-star: therefore, be the night ever so dark, so that neither moon nor star be visible, yet shall the mariner be able, by the help of this needle, to steer his vessel aright. This discovery, which appears useful in so great a degree to all who travel by sea, must remain concealed until other times; because no master mariner dares to use it lest he should fall under the imputation of being a magician; nor would the sailors venture themselves out to sea under his command, if he took with him an instrument which carries so great an appearance of being constructed under the influence of some infernal spirit.<sup>1</sup> A

ployée pour la navigation, tandis que nous la trouvons dès le xi<sup>e</sup> siècle chez les Arabes qui s'en servent non seulement dans leurs traversées maritimes, mais dans les voyages de caravanes au milieu des déserts," etc. Sédillot, *Histoire des Arabes*, tom. ii. p. 130.

<sup>1</sup> Is it not a curious instance of human perversity that while

time may arrive when these prejudices, which are of such great hindrance to researches into the secrets of nature, will be overcome; and it will be then that mankind shall reap the benefit of the labours of such learned men as Friar Bacon, and do justice to that industry and intelligence for which he and they now meet with no other return than obloquy and reproach.”<sup>1</sup>

That time was after all not so long in arriving, for by the end of the thirteenth century the compass had come to be quite generally used,<sup>2</sup> and the direction of a ship's course could be watched continuously in foul and fair weather alike. For taking the sun's altitude rude astrolabes and jack-staffs were in use, very crazy affairs as compared with the modern quadrant, but sufficiently accurate to enable a well-trained observer, in calculating his latitude, to get some-<sup>Latitude and longitude.</sup> where within two or three degrees of the truth. In calculating longitude the error was apt to be much greater, for in the absence of chronometers there were no accurate means for marking differences in time. It was necessary to depend upon the dead-reckoning, and the custom was first to sail due north or south to the parallel of the place of destination and then to turn at right angles and customary usage from time immemorial has characterized as “acts of God” such horrible events as famines, pestilences, and earthquakes, on the other hand when some purely beneficent invention has appeared, such as the mariner's compass or the printing press, it has commonly been accredited to the Devil? The case of Dr. Faustus is the most familiar example.

<sup>1</sup> This version is cited from Major's *Prince Henry the Navigator*, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> Hüllmann, *Städtewesen des Mittelalters*, bd. i. pp. 125-137.

sail due east or west. Errors of eight or even ten degrees were not uncommon. Thus at the end of a long outward voyage the ship might find itself a hundred miles or more to the north or south, and six or seven hundred miles to the east or west, of the point at which it had been aimed. Under all these difficulties, the approximations made to correct sailing by the most skilful mariners were sometimes wonderful. Doubtless this very poverty of resources served to sharpen their watchful sagacity.<sup>1</sup> To sail the seas was in those days a task requiring high mental equipment; it was no work for your commonplace skipper. Human faculty was taxed to its utmost, and human courage has never been more grandly displayed than by the glorious sailors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

We are now prepared to appreciate the character of the work that was done in the course of the first attempts to find an oceanic route from Europe to Asia. Then, as in other great epochs of history, men of genius arose to meet the occasion. In 1394 was born Prince Henry of Portugal, since known as Henry the Navigator.<sup>2</sup> He was fourth son of King John I.,

Prince Henry  
the Navigator,  
1394-1463.

<sup>1</sup> Compare the remarks of Mr. Clark Russell on the mariners of the seventeenth century, in his *William Dampier*, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> My chief authorities for the achievements of Prince Henry and his successors are the Portuguese historians, Barros and Azurara. The best edition of the former is a modern one, Barros y Couto, *Decadas da Asia, nova edição con Indice geral*, Lisbon, 1778-88, 24 vols. 12mo. I also refer sometimes to the Lisbon, 1752, edition of the *Decada primeira*, in folio. The priceless contemporary work of Azurara, written in 1453 under Prince Henry's direction, was not printed until the present century: Azurara,

the valiant and prudent king under whom began the golden age of Portugal, which lasted until the conquest of that country in 1580 by Philip II. of Spain. Henry's mother was Philippa, daughter of John of Gaunt. He was therefore cousin to our own Henry V. of England, whom he quite equalled in genius, while the laurels that he won were more glorious than those of Agincourt. In 1415, being then in his twenty-first year, Prince Henry played a distinguished part in the expedition which captured Ceuta from the Moors. While in Morocco he gathered such information as he could concerning the interior of the continent; he learned something about the oases of Sahara, the distant river Gambia, and the caravan trade between Tunis and Timbuctoo, whereby gold was carried from the Guinea coast to Mussulman ports on the Mediterranean. If this coast could be reached by sea, its gold might be brought to Lisbon as well. To divert such treasure from the infidel and secure it for a Christian nation was an enterprise fitted to kindle a prince's enthusiasm. While Henry felt the full force of these considerations, his thoughts took a wider range. The views of Pomponius Mela had always been held in high esteem by scholars of the Spanish peninsula,<sup>1</sup> and down past that Gold Coast Prince Henry saw

*Chronica do Descobrimento e Conquista de Guiné*, Paris, 1841, a superb edition in royal quarto, edited by the Viscount da Carreira, with introduction and notes by the Viscount de Santarem.

<sup>1</sup> Partly, perhaps, because Mela was himself a Spaniard, and partly because his opinions had been shared and supported by St. Isidore, of Seville (A. D. 570-636), whose learned works exercised immense authority throughout the Middle Ages. It is in one of

the ocean route to the Indies, the road whereby a vast empire might be won for Portugal and millions of wandering heathen souls might be gathered into the fold of Christ. To doubt the sincerity of the latter motive, or to belittle its influence, would be to do injustice to Prince Henry, — such cynical injustice as our hard-headed age is only too apt to mete out to that romantic time and the fresh enthusiasm which inspired its heroic performances. Prince Henry was earnest, conscientious, large-minded, and in the best sense devout; and there can be no question that in his mind, as in that of Columbus, and (with somewhat more alloy) in the minds of Cortes and others, the desire of converting the heathen and strengthening the Church served as a most powerful incentive to the actions which in the course of little more than a century quite changed the face of the world.

Filled with such lofty and generous thoughts, Prince Henry, on his return from Morocco, in 1418, chose for himself a secluded place of abode where he could devote himself to his purposes undisturbed by the court life at Lisbon or by political solicitations of whatever sort. In the Morocco campaign he had won such military renown that he was now invited by Pope Martin V. to take chief command of the papal army; and presently he received similar flattering offers from his own cousin, Henry V. of England, from John II. of

St. Isidore's books (*Etymologiarum*, xiii. 16, apud Migne, *Patrologia*, tom. lxxxii. col. 484) that we first find the word "Mediterranean" used as a proper name for that great land-locked sea.

His idea of an ocean route to the Indies, and what it might bring.

Castile, and from the Emperor Sigismund, who, for shamefully violating his imperial word and permitting the burning of John Huss, was now sorely pressed by the enraged and rebellious Bohemians. Such invitations had no charm for Henry. Refusing them one and all, he retired to the promontory of Sagres, in the southernmost province of Portugal, the ancient king-<sup>The Sacred Promontory.</sup> dom of Algarve, of which his father now appointed him governor. That lonely and barren rock, protruding into the ocean, had long ago impressed the imagination of Greek and Roman writers; they called it the Sacred Promontory, and supposed it to be the westernmost limit of the habitable earth.<sup>1</sup> There the young prince proceeded to build an astronomical observatory, the first that his country had ever seen, and to gather about him a school of men competent to teach and men eager to learn the mysteries of map-making and the art of navigation. There he spent the greater part of his life; thence he sent forth his captains to plough the southern seas; and as year after year the weather-beaten ships returned from their venturesome pilgrimage, the first glimpse of home that greeted them was likely to be the beacon-light in the tower where the master sat poring over problems of Archimedes or watching the stars. For Henry, whose motto was "Talent de bien faire," or (in the old French usage) "Desire<sup>2</sup> to do well,"

<sup>1</sup> Ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ περὶ τῆς ἔξω στηλῶν λέγεται· δυσμικώτατον μὲν γὰρ σημεῖον τῆς οἰκουμένης, τὸ τῶν Ἰβήρων ἀκρωτήριον, ὃ καλοῦσιν Ἰερόν. Strabo, ii. 5, § 14; cf. Dionysius Periegetes, v. 161. In reality it lies not quite so far west as the country around Lisbon.

<sup>2</sup> See Littré, *Dictionnaire*, s. v. "Talent;" Du Cange, *Glossa-*

was wont to throw himself whole-hearted into whatever he undertook, and the study of astronomy and mathematics he pursued so zealously as to reach a foremost place among the experts of his time. With such tastes and such ambition, he was singularly fortunate in wielding ample pecuniary resources; if such a combination could be more often realized, the welfare of mankind would be notably enhanced. Prince Henry was Grand Master of the Order of Christ, an organization half military, half religious, and out of its abundant revenues he made the appropriations needful for the worthy purpose of advancing the interests of science, converting the heathen, and winning a commercial empire for Portugal. At first he had to encounter the usual opposition to lavish expenditure for a distant object without hope of immediate returns; but after a while his dogged perseverance began to be rewarded with such successes as to silence all adverse comment.

The first work in hand was the rediscovery of coasts and islands that had ceased to be visited even before the breaking up of the Roman Empire. For more than a thousand years the Madeiras and Canaries had been wellnigh forgotten, and upon the coast of the African continent no ship ventured beyond Cape Non, the headland so named because it said "No!" to the wistful mariner.<sup>1</sup> There

The Madeira  
and Canary  
islands.

*rium*, "talentum, animi decretum, voluntas, desiderium, cupiditas," etc.; cf. Raynouard, *Glossaire Provençale*, tom. v. p. 296. French was then fashionable at court, in Lisbon as well as in London.

<sup>1</sup> The Portuguese proverb was "Quem passar o Cabo de Não

had been some re-awakening of maritime activity in the course of the fourteenth century, chiefly due, no doubt, to the use of the compass. Between 1317 and 1351 certain Portuguese ships, with Genoese pilots, had visited not only the Madeiras and Canaries, but even the Azores, a thousand miles out in the Atlantic; and these groups of islands are duly laid down upon the so-called Medici map of 1351, preserved in the Laurentian library at Florence.<sup>1</sup> The voyage to the Azores was probably the greatest feat of ocean navigation that had been performed down to that time, but it was not followed by colonization. Again, somewhere about 1377 Madeira seems to have been visited by Robert Machin, an Englishman, whose adventures make a most romantic story; and in 1402 the Norman knight, Jean de Béthencourt, had begun to found a colony in the Canaries, for which, in return for aid and supplies, he did homage to the King of Castile.<sup>2</sup> As for the African

ou voltará ou não," i. e. "Whoever passes Cape *Non* will return or not." See Las Casas, *Hist. de las Indias*, tom. i. p. 173; Mariana, *Hist. de España*, tom. i. p. 91; Barros, tom. i. p. 36.

<sup>1</sup> An engraved copy of this map may be found in Major's *Prince Henry the Navigator*, London, 1868, facing p. 107. I need hardly say that in all that relates to the Portuguese voyages I am under great obligation to Mr. Major's profoundly learned and critical researches. He has fairly conquered this subject and made it his own, and whoever touches it after him, however lightly, must always owe him a tribute of acknowledgment.

<sup>2</sup> See Bontier and Le Verrier, *The Canarian, or, Book of the Conquest and Conversion of the Canaries*, translated and edited by R. H. Major, London, 1872 (Hakluyt Soc.). In 1414, Béthencourt's nephew, left in charge of these islands, sold them to Prince Henry, but Castile persisted in claiming them, and at length in 1479 her claim was recognized by treaty with Portugal.

coast, Cape Non had also been passed at some time during the fourteenth century, for Cape Bojador is laid down on the Catalan map of 1375 ; but beyond that point no one had dared take the risks of the unknown sea.

The first achievement under Prince Henry's guidance was the final rediscovery and colonization of Porto Santo and Madeira in 1418-25 by Gonsalvez Zarco, Tristam Vaz, and Bartholomew Perestrelo.<sup>1</sup> This work occupied the prince's attention for some years, and then came up the problem of Cape Bojador. The difficulty was twofold ;

Of all the African islands, therefore, the Canaries alone came to belong, and still belong, to Spain.

<sup>1</sup> Perestrelo had with him a female rabbit which littered on the voyage, and being landed, with her young, at Porto Santo, forthwith illustrated the fearful rate of multiplication of which organisms are capable in the absence of enemies or other adverse circumstances to check it. (Darwin, *Origin of Species*, chap. iii.) These rabbits swarmed all over the island and devoured every green and succulent thing, insomuch that they came near converting it into a desert. Prince Henry's enemies, who were vexed at the expenditure of money in such colonizing enterprises, were thus furnished with a wonderful argument. They maintained that God had evidently created those islands for beasts alone, not for men ! "En este tiempo habia en todo Portugal grandísimas murmuraciones del Infante, viéndole tan cudicioso y poner tanta diligencia en el descubrir de la tierra y costa de África, diciendo que destruía el reino en los gastos que hacía, y consumía los vecinos dél en poner en tanto peligro y daño la gente portuguesa, donde muchos morían, enviándolos en demanda de tierras que nunca los reyes de España pasados se atrevieron á emprender, donde había de hacer muchas viudas y huérfanos con esta su porfía. Tomaban por argumento, que Dios no había criado aquellas tierras sino para bestias, pues en tan poco tiempo en aquella isla tantos conejos había multiplicado, que no dejaban cosa que para sustentacion de los hombres fuese menester." Las Casas, *Hist. de las Indias*, tom. i. p. 180. See also Azurara, *Chronica do descobrimento e conquista de Guiné*, cap. lxxxiii.

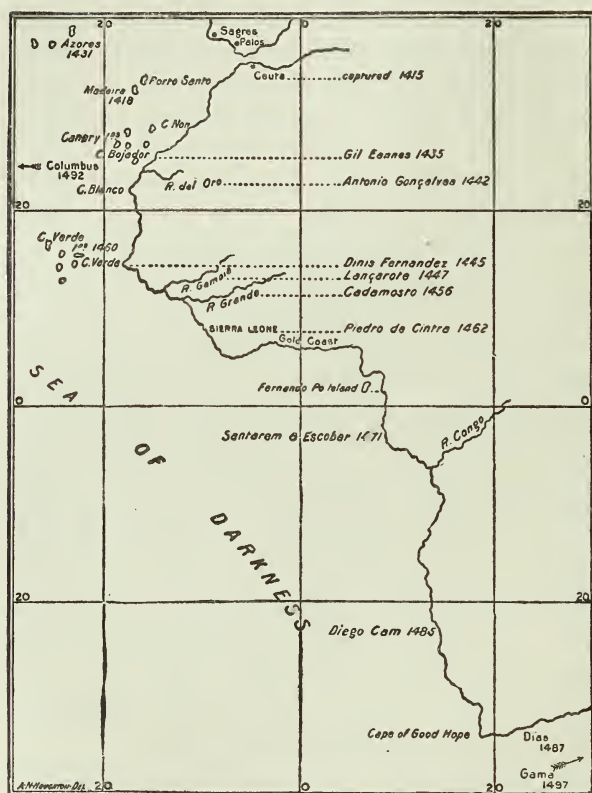
the waves about that headland were apt to be boisterous, and wild sailor's fancies were apt to enkindle a mutinous spirit in the crews. It was not until 1433-35 that Gil Eannes, a commander of unusually clear head and steady nerves, made three attempts and fairly passed the dreaded spot. In the first attempt he failed, as his predecessors had done, to double the cape; in the second attempt he doubled it; in the third he sailed nearly two hundred miles beyond.

Gil Eannes  
passes Cape  
Bojador.

This achievement of Gil Eannes (*anglicè*, plain Giles Jones) marks an era. It was the beginning of great things. When we think of the hesitation with which this step was taken, and the vociferous applause that greeted the successful captain, it is strange to reflect that babes were already born in 1435 who were to live to hear of the prodigious voyages of Columbus and Gama, Vesputius and Magellan. After seven years a further step was taken in advance; in 1442 Antonio Gonçalves brought gold and negro slaves from the Rio d' Ouro, or Rio del Oro, four hundred miles beyond Cape Bojador. Of this beginning of the modern slave-trade I shall treat in a future chapter.<sup>1</sup> Let it suffice here to observe that Prince Henry did not discourage but sanctioned it. The first aspect which this baleful traffic assumed in his mind was that of a means for converting the heathen, by bringing black men and women to Portugal to be taught the true faith and the ways of civilized people, that they might in due season be sent back to their native

Beginning of  
the modern  
slave-trade,  
1442.

<sup>1</sup> See below, vol. ii. pp. 429-431.



Portuguese voyages on the coast of Africa.

land to instruct their heathen brethren. The kings of Portugal should have a Christian empire in Africa, and in course of time the good work might be extended to the Indies. Accordingly a special message was sent to Pope Eugenius IV., informing him of the discovery of the country of these barbar-

Papal grant of heathen countries to the Portuguese crown.

ous people beyond the limits of the Mussulman world, and asking for a grant in perpetuity to Portugal of all heathen lands that might be discovered in further voyages beyond Cape Bojador, even so far as to include the Indies.<sup>1</sup> The request found favour in the eyes of Eugenius, and the grant was solemnly confirmed by succeeding popes. To these proceedings we shall again have occasion to refer. We have here to observe that the discovery of gold and the profits of the slave-trade — though it was as yet conducted upon a very small scale — served to increase the interest of the Portuguese people in Prince Henry's work and to diminish the obstacles in his way. A succession of gallant captains, whose names make a glorious roll of honour, carried on the work of exploration, reaching the farthest point that had been attained by the ancients. In 1445 Dinis Fernandez passed

<sup>1</sup> "En el año de 1442, viendo el Infante que se habia pasado el cabo del Boxador y que la tierra iba muy adelante, y que todos los navíos que inviaba traian muchos esclavos moros, con que pagaba los gastos que hacia y que cada día crecia más el provecho y se prosperaba su amada negociacion, determinó de inviar á suplicar al Papa Martino V., . . . que hiciese gracia á la Corona real de Portugal de los reinos y señoríos que habia y hobiese desde el cabo del Boxador adelante, hácia el Oriente y la India inclusive; y así se las concedió, . . . con todas las tierras, puertos, islas, tratos, rescates, pesquerías y cosas á esto pertenecientes, poniendo censuras y penas á todos los reyes cristianos, príncipes, y señores y comunidades que á esto le perturbasen; despues, dicen, que los sumos pontífices, sucesores de Martino, como Eugenio IV. y Nicolas V. y Calixto IV. lo confirmaron." Las Casas, *Hist. de las Indias*, tom. i. p. 185. The name of Martin V. is a slip of the memory on the part of Las Casas. That pope had died of apoplexy eleven years before. It was Eugenius IV. who made this memorable grant to the crown of Portugal. The error is repeated in Irving's *Columbus*, vol. i. p. 339.

Cape Verde, and two years later Lançarote found the mouth of the Gambia. In 1456 Luigi Cadamosto — a Venetian captain in the service of Portugal — went as far as the Rio Grande; in 1460 Diego Gomez discovered the Cape Verde islands; and in 1462 Piedro de Cintra reached  
Advance to  
Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, in various expeditions between 1431 and 1466, the Azores (i. e. “Hawk” islands) were re-discovered and colonized, and voyages out into the Sea of Darkness began to lose something of their manifold terrors.

Prince Henry did not live to see Africa circum-navigated. At the time of his death, in 1463, his ships had not gone farther than the spot where Hanno found his gorillas two thousand years before. But the work of this excellent prince did not end with his death. His adventurous spirit lived on in the school of accomplished navigators he had trained. Many voyages were made after 1462, of which we need mention only those that marked new stages of discovery. In 1471 two knights of the royal household, João de Santarem and Pedro de Escobar, sailed down the Gold Coast and crossed the equator; three years later the line  
Advance to  
the Hottentot  
coast. was again crossed by Fernando Po, discoverer of the island that bears his name. In 1484 Diego Cam went on as far as the mouth of the Congo, and entered into

<sup>1</sup> The first published account of the voyages of Cadamosto and Cintra was in the *Paesi nouamente retrouati*, Vicenza, 1507, a small quarto which can now sometimes be bought for from twelve to fifteen hundred dollars. See also Grynæus, *Novvs Orbis*, Basel, 1532.

very friendly relations with the negroes there. In a second voyage in 1485 this enterprising captain pushed on a thousand miles farther, and set up a cross in 22° south latitude on the coast of the Hot-tentot country. Brisk trading went on along the Gold Coast, and missionaries were sent to the Congo.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was in the course of these voyages upon the African coast that civilized Europeans first became familiar with people below the upper status of barbarism. Savagery and barbarism of the lower types were practically unknown in the Middle Ages, and almost, though probably not quite unknown, to the civilized peoples of the Mediterranean in ancient times. The history of the two words is interesting. The Greek word *βάρβαρος*, whence Eng. *barbarian* (= Sanskrit *barbara*, Latin *balbus*), means "a stammerer," or one who talks gibberish, i. e. in a language we do not understand. Aristophanes (*Aves*, 199) very prettily applies the epithet to the inarticulate singing of birds. The names *Welsh*, *Walloon*, *Wallachian*, and *Belooch*, given to these peoples by their neighbours, have precisely the same meaning (Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, ii. 252); and in like manner the Russians call the Germans *Nyemetch*, or people who cannot talk (Schafarik, *Slawische Alterthümer*, i. 443; Pott, *Etym. Forsch.*, ii. 521). The Græeks called all men but themselves barbarians, including such civilized people as the Persians. The Romans applied the name to all tribes and nations outside the limits of the Empire, and the Italians of the later Middle Ages bestowed it upon all nations outside of Italy. Upon its lax use in recent times I have already commented (above, pp. 25-35). The tendency to apply the epithet to savages is modern. The word *savage*, on the other hand, which came to us as the Old French *sauvage* or *salvage* (Ital. *selvaggio*, *salvatico*), is the Latin *silvaticus*, *sylvaticus*, *salvaticus*, that which pertains to a forest and is sylvan or wild. In its earliest usage it had reference to plants and beasts rather than to men. Wild apples, pears, or laurels are characterized by the epithet *sylvaticus* in Varro, *De re rustica*, i. 40; and either this adjective, or its equivalent *silvestris*, was used of wild animals as contrasted with domesticated beasts, as wild sheep and wild fowl, in Columella, vii. 2; viii. 12, or wolves, in Propertius, iii. 7, or mice, in Pliny, xxx. 22. (Occasionally it is used of men, as in Pliny, viii. 79.) The meaning was the same in

These voyages into the southern hemisphere dealt a damaging blow to the theory of an impas-

mediæval Latin (Du Cange, *Glossarium*, Niort, 1886, tom. vii. p. 686) and in Old French, as "La douce voix du loussignol sauvage" (Michel, *Chansons de chatelain de Coucy*, xix.). In the romance of *Robert le Diable*, in the verses

Sire, se vos fustes Sauvages  
Viers moi, je n'i pris mie garde, etc.,

the reference is plainly to degenerate civilized men frequenting the forests, such as bandits or outlaws, not to what we call savages.

Mediæval writers certainly had some idea of savages, but it was not based upon any actual acquaintance with such people, but upon imperfectly apprehended statements of ancient writers. At the famous ball at the Hotel de Saint Pol in Paris, in 1393, King Charles VI. and five noblemen were dressed in close-fitting suits of linen, thickly covered from head to foot with tow or flax, the colour of hair, so as to look like "savages." In this attire nobody recognized them, and the Duke of Orleans, in his eagerness to make out who they were, brought a torch too near, so that the flax took fire, and four of the noblemen were burned to death. See Froissart's *Chronicles*, tr. Johnes, London, 1806, vol. xi. pp. 69-76. The point of the story is that savages were supposed to be men covered with hair, like beasts, and Froissart, in relating it, evidently knew no better. Whence came this notion of hairy men? Probably from Hanno's gorillas (see above, p. 301), through Pliny, whose huge farrago of facts and fancies was a sort of household Peter Parley in mediæval monasteries. Pliny speaks repeatedly of men covered with hair from head to foot, and scatters them about according to his fancy, in Carmania and other distant places (*Hist. Nat.*, vi. 28, 36, vii. 2).

Greek and Roman writers seem to have had some slight knowledge of savagery and the lower status of barbarism as prevailing in remote places ("Ptolomée dit que es extrémités de la terre habitable sont gens sauvages," Oresme, *Les Éthiques d'Aristote*, Paris, 1488), but their remarks are usually vague. Seldom do we get such a clean-cut statement as that of Tacitus about the Finns, that they have neither horses nor houses, sleep on the ground, are clothed in skins, live by the chase, and for want of iron use bone-tipped arrows (*Germania*, cap. 46). More often we have unconscionable yarns about men without noses, or with only one

sable fiery zone; but as to the circumnavigability of the African continent, the long stretch of coast beyond the equator seemed more in harmony with Ptolemy's views than with those of Mela. The eastward trend of the Guinea coast was at first in favour of the latter geographer, but when Santarem and Escobar found it turning southward to the equator the facts began to refute him. According to Mela

Effect of these discoveries upon the theories of Ptolemy and Mela.

eye, tailed men, solid-hoofed men, Amazons, and parthenogenesis. The Troglodytes, or Cave-dwellers, on the Nubian coast of the Red Sea seem to have been in the middle status of barbarism (Diodorus, iii. 32; Agatharchides, 61-63), and the Ichthyophagi, or Fish-eaters, whom Nearchus found on the shores of Gedrosia (Arrian, *Indica*, cap. 29), were probably in a lower stage, perhaps true savages. It is exceedingly curious that Mela puts a race of pygmies at the headwaters of the Nile (see map above, p. 304). Is this only an echo from *Iliad*, iii. 6, or can any ancient traveller have penetrated far enough inland toward the equator to have heard reports of the dwarfish race lately visited by Stanley (*In Darkest Africa*, vol. ii. pp. 100-104, 164)? Strabo had no real knowledge of savagery in Africa (cf. Bunbury, *Hist. Ancient Geog.*, ii. 331). Sataspes may have seen barbarians of low type, possibly on one of the Canary isles (see description of Canarians in Major's *Prince Henry*, p. 212). Ptolemy had heard of an island of cannibals in the Indian ocean, perhaps one of the Andaman group, visited A. D. 1293 by Marco Polo. The people of these islands rank among the lowest savages on the earth, and Marco was disgusted and horrified; their beastly faces, with huge prognathous jaws and projecting canine teeth, he tried to describe by calling them a dog-headed people. Sir Henry Yule suggests that the mention of Cynocephali, or Dog-heads, in ancient writers may have had an analogous origin (*Marco Polo*, vol. ii. p. 252). This visit of the Venetian traveller to Andaman was one of very few real glimpses of savagery vouchsafed to Europeans before the fifteenth century; and a general review of the subject brings out in a strong light the truthfulness and authenticity of the description of American Indians in Eric the Red's Saga, as shown above, pp. 185-192.

they should have found it possible at once to sail eastward to the gulf of Aden. What if it should turn out after all that there was no connection between the Atlantic and Indian oceans? Every added league of voyaging toward the tropic of Capricorn must have been fraught with added discouragement, for it went to prove that, even if Ptolemy's theory was wrong, at any rate the ocean route to Asia was indefinitely longer than had been supposed. But was it possible to imagine any other route that should be more direct? To a trained mariner of original and imaginative mind, sojourning in Portugal and keenly watching the progress of African discovery, the years just following the voyage of Santarem and Escobar would be a period eminently fit for suggesting such a question. Let us not forget this date of 1471 while we follow Prince Henry's work to its first grand climax.

About the time that Diego Cam was visiting the tribes on the Congo, the negro king of Benin, a country by the mouth of the Niger, sent an embassy to John II. of Portugal (Prince Henry's nephew), with a request that missionary priests might be sent to Benin. It has been thought that the woolly-haired chieftain was really courting an alliance with the Portuguese, or perhaps he thought their "medicine men" might have the knack of confounding his foes. The negro envoy told King John that a thousand miles or so east of Benin there was an august sovereign who ruled over many subject peoples, and at whose court there was an order of chivalry whose badge or emblem was

a brazen cross. Such, at least, was the king's interpretation of the negro's words, and forthwith he jumped to the conclusion that this African potentate must be Prester John, <sup>News of  
Prester John.</sup> whose name was redolent of all the marvels of the mysterious East. To find Prester John would be a long step toward golden Cathay and the isles of spice. So the king of Portugal rose to the occasion, and attacked the problem on both flanks at once. He sent Pedro de Covilham by way of Egypt to Aden, and he sent Bartholomew Dias, with three fifty-ton caravels, to make one more attempt to find an end to the Atlantic coast of Africa.

Covilham's journey was full of interesting experiences. He sailed from Aden to Hindustan, and on his return visited Abyssinia, where <sup>Covilham's  
journey.</sup> the semi-Christian king took such a liking to him that he would never let him go. So Covilham spent the rest of his life, more than thirty years, in Abyssinia, whence he was able now and then to send to Portugal items of information concerning eastern Africa that were afterwards quite serviceable in voyages upon the Indian ocean.<sup>1</sup>

The daring captain, Bartholomew Dias, started in August, 1486, and after passing nearly four hundred miles beyond the tropic of Capricorn, was driven due south before heavy winds for thirteen days without seeing land. At the end of this stress of weather he turned his prows eastward, expecting soon to reach the coast. But as he had passed the southernmost point of Africa

<sup>1</sup> See Major's *India in the Fifteenth Century*, pp. lxxxv.-xc.

and no land appeared before him, after a while he steered northward and landed near the mouth of Gauritz river, more than two hundred miles east of the Cape of Good Hope. Thence he pushed on about four hundred miles farther eastward as far as the Great Fish river (about  $33^{\circ} 30' S.$ ,  $27^{\circ} 10' E.$ ), where the coast begins to have a steady trend to the northeast. Dias was now fairly in the Indian ocean, and could look out with wistful triumph upon that waste of waters, but his worn-out crews refused to go any farther and he was compelled reluctantly to turn back. On the way homeward the ships passed in full sight of the famous headland which Dias called the Stormy Cape; but after arriving at Lisbon, in December, 1487, when the report of this noble voyage was laid before King John II., his majesty said, Nay, let it rather be called the Cape of Good Hope, since there was now much reason to believe that they had found the long-sought ocean route to the Indies.<sup>1</sup> Though this opinion turned out to be correct, it is well for us to remember that the proof was not yet com-

<sup>1</sup> The greatest of Portuguese poets represents the Genius of the Cape as appearing to the storm-tossed mariners in cloud-like shape, like the Jinni that the fisherman of the Arabian tale released from a casket. He expresses indignation at their audacity in discovering his secret, hitherto hidden from mankind: —

Eu sou aquella occulto e grande Cabo,  
 A quem chamais vós outros Tormentorio,  
 Que nunca á Ptolomeo, Pomponio, Estrabo,  
 Plinio, e quantos passaram, fui notorio:  
 Aqui toda a Africana costa acabo  
 Neste meu nunca vista promontorio,  
 Que para o polo Antartico se estende,  
 A quem vossa ousadia tanto offende.

Camoens, *Os Lusíadas*, v. 60.

Bartholomew  
 Dias passes  
 the Cape of  
 Good Hope  
 and enters the  
 Indian ocean.

plete. No one could yet say with certainty that the African coast, if followed a few miles east of Great Fish river, would not again trend southward and run all the way to the pole. The completed proof was not obtained until Vasco da Gama crossed the Indian ocean ten years later.

This voyage of Bartholomew Dias was longer and in many respects more remarkable than any that is known to have been made before that time. From Lisbon back to Lisbon, reckoning the sinuities of the coast, but making no allowance for tacking, the distance run by those tiny craft was not less than thirteen thousand miles.

This voyage completed the overthrow of the fiery-zone doctrine, so far as Africa

Some effects  
of the discov-  
ery.

was concerned ; it penetrated far into the southern temperate zone where Mela had placed his antipodal world ; it dealt a staggering blow to the continental theory of Ptolemy ; and its success made men's minds readier for yet more daring enterprises. Among the shipmates of Dias on this ever memorable voyage was a well-trained and enthusiastic Italian mariner, none other than Bartholomew, the younger brother

Bartholomew  
Columbus.

of Christopher Columbus. There was true dramatic propriety in the presence of that man at just this time ; for not only did all these later African voyages stand in a direct causal relation to the discovery of America, but as an immediate consequence of the doubling of the Cape of Good Hope we shall presently find Bartholomew Columbus in the very next year on his way to England, to enlist the aid of King Henry VII. in behalf of

a scheme of unprecedented boldness for which his elder brother had for some years been seeking to obtain the needful funds. Not long after that disappointing voyage of Santarem and Escobar in 1471, this original and imaginative sailor, Christopher Columbus, had conceived (or adopted and made his own) a new method of solving the problem of an ocean route to Cathay. We have now to sketch the early career of this epoch-making man, and to see how he came to be brought into close relations with the work of the Portuguese explorers.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE SEARCH FOR THE INDIES.

#### WESTWARD OR SPANISH ROUTE.

OUR information concerning the life of Columbus before 1492 is far from being as satisfactory as one could wish. Unquestionably he is to be deemed fortunate in having had for his biographers two such men as his friend Las Casas, one of the noblest characters and most faithful historians of that or any age, and his own son Ferdinand Columbus, a most accomplished scholar and bibliographer. The later years of Ferdinand's life were devoted, with loving care, to the preparation of a biography of his father; and his book — which unfortunately survives only in the Italian translation of Alfonso Ulloa,<sup>1</sup> published in Venice in 1571 — is of priceless value. As Washington Irving long ago wrote, it is “an invaluable document, entitled to great faith, and is the corner-

Sources of information concerning the life of Columbus: Las Casas and Ferdinand Columbus.

<sup>1</sup> *Historie del S. D. Fernando Colombo; Nelle quali s' ha particolare, & vera relatione della vita, & de' fatti dell' Ammiraglio D. Christoforo Colombo, suo padre: Et dello scoprimento, ch' egli fece dell' Indie Occidentali, dette Monde-Nvovo, hora possedute dal Sereniss. Re Catolico: Nuouamente di lingua Spagnuola tradotte nell' Italiana dal S. Alfonso Vllloa. Con privilegio.* IN VENETIA, MDLXXI. Appresso Francesco de' Franceschi Sanese. The principal reprints are those of Milan, 1614; Venice, 1676 and 1678; London, 1867. I always cite it as *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*.

stone of the history of the American continent.”<sup>1</sup> After Ferdinand’s death, in 1539, his papers seem to have passed into the hands of Las Casas, who, from 1552 to 1561, in the seclusion of the college of San Gregorio at Valladolid, was engaged in writing his great “History of the Indies.”<sup>2</sup> Ferdinand’s superb library, one of the finest in Europe, was bequeathed to the cathedral at Seville.<sup>3</sup> It contained some twenty thousand volumes in print and manuscript, four fifths of which, through shameful neglect or vandalism, have perished or been scattered. Four thousand volumes, however, are still preserved, and this library (known as the “Biblioteca Colombina”) is full of interest for the historian. Book-buying was to Ferdinand Columbus one of the most important occupations in life. His books were not only carefully numbered, but on the last leaf of each one he wrote a memorandum of the time and place of its purchase and the sum of money paid for it.<sup>4</sup> This habit of Ferdinand’s has fur-

The Biblioteca  
Colombina at  
Seville.

<sup>1</sup> Irving’s *Life of Columbus*, New York, 1868, vol. iii. p. 375. My references, unless otherwise specified, are to this, the “Geoffrey Crayon,” edition.

<sup>2</sup> Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias, ahora por primera vez dada á luz por el Marqués de la Fuensanta del Valle y D. José Sancho Rayon*, Madrid, 1875, 5 vols. 8vo.

<sup>3</sup> “Fu questo D. Ernando di non minor valore del padre, ma di molte più lettere et scienze dotato che quelle non fu; et il quale lasciò alla Chiesa maggiore di Siviglia, dove hoggi si vede honorevolmente sepolto, una, non sola numerosissima, ma richissi ma libreria, et piena di molti libri in ogni facoltà et scienza rarissimi: laquale da coloro che l’han veduta, vien stimata delle più rare cose di tutta Europa.” Molet’s prefatory letter to *Vita dell’ Ammiraglio*, April 25, 1571.

<sup>4</sup> For example, “*Manuel de la Sancta Fe católica*, Sevilla, 1495,

nished us with clues to the solution of some interesting questions. Besides this, he was much given to making marginal notes and comments, which are sometimes of immense value, and, more than all, there are still to be seen in this library a few books that belonged to Christopher Columbus himself, with very important notes in his own handwriting and in that of his brother Bartholomew. Las Casas was familiar with this grand collection in the days of its completeness, he was well acquainted with all the members of the Columbus family, and he had evidently read the manuscript sources of Ferdinand's book; for a comparison with Ulloa's version shows that considerable portions of the original Spanish text — or of the documents upon which it rested — are preserved in the work of Las Casas.<sup>1</sup> The citation and adoption of Ferdinand's statements by the latter writer, who was able independently to verify them, is therefore in most cases equivalent to corroboration, and the two writers together form an authority of the weightiest kind, and not lightly to be questioned or set aside.

in-4. Costó en Toledo 34 maravedis, año 1511, 9 de Octubre, No. 3004." "*Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea*, Sevilla, 1502, in-4. Muchas figuras. Costó en Roma 25 cuatrines, por Junio de 1515. No. 2417," etc. See Harrissee, *Fernand Colomb*, Paris, 1872, p. 13.

<sup>1</sup> "L' autorità di Las Casas è d' una suprema e vitale importanza tanto nella storia di Cristoforo Colombo, come nell' esame delle *Historie* di Fernando suo figlio. . . E dal confronto tra questi due scrittori emergerà una omogeneità sì perfetta, che si potrebbe coi termini del frate domenicano ritrovare o rifare per due terzi il testo originale spagnuolo delle *Historie* di Fernando Colombo." Peragallo, *L' autenticità delle Historie di Fernando Colombo*, Genoa, 1884, p. 23.

Besides these books of most fundamental importance, we have valuable accounts of some parts of the life of Columbus by his friend Andres Bernaldez, the curate of Los Palacios near Seville.<sup>1</sup> Peter Martyr, of Anghiera, by Lago Maggiore, was an intimate friend of Columbus, and gives a good account of his voyages, besides mentioning him in sundry epistles.<sup>2</sup> Columbus himself, moreover, was such a voluminous writer that his contemporaries laughed about it. "God grant," says Zuñiga in a letter to the Marquis de Pescara, "God grant that Gutierrez may never come short for paper, for he writes more than Ptolemy, more than Columbus, the man who discovered the Indies."<sup>3</sup> These writings are in great part lost, though doubtless a good many things will yet be brought to light in Spain by persistent rummaging. We have, however, from sixty to seventy letters and reports by Columbus, of which twenty-three at least are in his own handwriting; and all these have been published.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, while these contemporary mate-

<sup>1</sup> *Historia de los Reyes Católicos D. Fernando y D<sup>a</sup> Isabel. Crónica inédita del siglo XV, escrita por el Bachiller Andrés Bernaldez, cura que fué de Los Palacios, Granada, 1856, 2 vols. small 4to.* It is a book of very high authority.

<sup>2</sup> *De orbe novo Decades*, Alcalá, 1516; *Opus epistolarum*, Compluti (Alcalá), 1530; HARRISSE, *Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima*, Nos. 88, 160.

<sup>3</sup> "A Gutierrez vuestro solicitador, ruego à Dios que nunca le falte papel, porque escribe mas que Tolomeo y que Colon, el que halló las Indias." Rivadeneyra, *Curiosidades bibliográficas*, p. 59, apud HARRISSE, *Christophe Colomb*, tom. i. p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> HARRISSE, *loc. cit.*, in 1884, gives the number at sixty-four.

rials give us abundant information concerning the great discoverer, from the year 1492 until his death, it is quite otherwise with his earlier years, especially before his arrival in Spain in 1484. His own allusions to these earlier years are sometimes hard to interpret;<sup>1</sup> and as for his son Ferdinand, that writer confesses, with characteristic and winning frankness, that his information is imperfect, inasmuch as filial respect had deterred him from closely interrogating his father on such points, or, to tell the plain truth, being still very young when his father died, he had not then come to recognize their importance.<sup>2</sup> This does not seem strange when we reflect that Ferdinand must have seen very little of his father until in 1502, at the age of fourteen, he accompanied him on that last difficult and disastrous voyage, in which the sick and harassed old man could have had but little time or strength for aught but the work in hand. It is not strange that when, a quarter of a century later, the son set about his literary task, he should now and then have got a date wrong, or have narrated some inci-

Defects in  
Ferdinand's  
information.

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes from a slip of memory or carelessness of phrasing, on Columbus's part, sometimes from our lacking the clue, sometimes from an error in numerals, common enough at all times.

<sup>2</sup> "Ora, l' Ammiraglio avendo cognizione delle dette scienze, cominciò ad attendere al mare, e a fare alcuni viaggi in levante e in ponente; de' quali, e di molte altre cose di quei primi dì io non ho piena notizia; perciocchè egli venne a morte a tempo che io non aveva tanto ardire, o pratica, per la riverenza filiale, che io ardisi di richiederlo di cotali cose; o, per parlare più veramente, allora mi ritrovava io, come giovane, molto lontano da cotal pensiero." *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. iv.

dents in a confused manner, or have admitted some gossiping stories, the falsehood of which can now plainly be detected. Such blemishes, which occur chiefly in the earlier part of Ferdinand's book, do not essentially detract from its high authority.<sup>1</sup> The limits which bounded the son's

<sup>1</sup> Twenty years ago M. Harrissee published in Spanish and French a critical essay maintaining that the *Vita dell' Ammiraglio* was not written by Ferdinand Columbus, but probably by the famous scholar Perez de Oliva, professor in the university of Salamanca, who died in 1530 (*D. Fernando Colon, historiador de su padre*, Seville, 1871; *Fernand Colomb: sa vie, ses œuvres*, Paris, 1872). The Spanish manuscript of the book had quite a career. As already observed, it is clear that Las Casas used it, probably between 1552 and 1561. From Ferdinand's nephew, Luis Columbus, it seems to have passed in 1568 into the hands of Baliano di Fornari, a prominent citizen of Genoa, who sent it to Venice with the intention of having it edited and published with Latin and Italian versions. All that ever appeared, however, was the Italian version made by Ulloa and published in 1571. Harrissee supposes that the Spanish manuscript, written by Oliva, was taken to Genoa by some adventurer and palmed off upon Baliano di Fornari as the work of Ferdinand Columbus. But inasmuch as Harrissee also supposes that Oliva probably wrote the book (about 1525) at Seville, under Ferdinand's eyes and with documents furnished by him, it becomes a question, in such case, how far was Oliva anything more than an amanuensis to Ferdinand? and there seems really to be precious little wool after so much loud crying. If the manuscript was actually written "sous les yeux de Fernand et avec documents fournis par lui," most of the arguments alleged to prove that it could not have emanated from the son of Columbus fall to the ground. It becomes simply a question whether Ulloa may have here and there tampered with the text, or made additions of his own. To some extent he seems to have done so, but wherever the Italian version is corroborated by the Spanish extracts in Las Casas, we are on solid ground, for Las Casas died five years before the Italian version was published. M. Harrissee does not seem as yet to have convinced many scholars. His arguments have been justly, if somewhat severely, characterized by my old friend, the lamented Henry Stevens (*Historical Collections*,

accurate knowledge seem also to have bounded that of such friends as Bernaldez, who did not become acquainted with Columbus until after his arrival in Spain.

In recent years elaborate researches have been made, by Henry Harrisse and others, in the archives of Genoa, Savona, Seville, and other places with which Columbus was connected, in the hope of supplementing this imperfect information concerning his earlier years.<sup>1</sup> A number of data have thus been obtained, which, while clearing up the subject most remarkably in some directions, have been made to mystify and embroil it in others. There is scarcely a date or a fact relating to Columbus before 1492 but has been made the subject of hot dispute; and some pretty wholesale reconstructions of his biography have been attempted.<sup>2</sup> The general impression, however, which the discussions of the past twenty years have left upon my mind, is that the more violent hypotheses are not likely

Researches of  
Henry Har-  
risse.

London, 1881, vol. i. No. 1379), and have been elaborately refuted by M. d'Avezac, *Le livre de Ferdinand Colomb: revue critique des allegations proposées contre son authenticité*, Paris, 1873; and by Prospero Peragallo, *L'autenticità delle Historie di Fernando Colombo*, Genoa, 1884. See also Fabié, *Vida de Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas*, Madrid, 1869, tom. i. pp. 360-372.

<sup>1</sup> See Harrisse, *Christophe Colomb*, Paris, 1884, 2 vols., a work of immense research, absolutely indispensable to every student of the subject, though here and there somewhat over-ingenious and hypercritical, and in general unduly biased by the author's private crotchet about the work of Ferdinand.

<sup>2</sup> One of the most radical of these reconstructions may be found in the essay by M. d'Avezac, "Canevas chronologique de la vie de Christophe Colomb," in *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, Paris, 1872, 6<sup>e</sup> série, tom. iv. pp. 5-59.

to be sustained, and that the newly-ascertained facts do not call for any very radical interference with the traditional lines upon which the life of Columbus has heretofore been written.<sup>1</sup> At any rate there seems to be no likelihood of such interference as to modify our views of the causal sequence of events that led to the westward search for the Indies; and it is this relation of cause and effect that chiefly concerns us in a history of the Discovery of America.

The date of the birth of Columbus is easy to determine approximately, but hard to determine with precision. In the voluminous discussion upon this subject the extreme limits assigned have been 1430 and 1456, but neither of these extremes is admissible, and our choice really lies somewhere between 1436 and 1446. Among the town archives of Savona is a deed of sale executed August 7, 1473, by the father of Christopher Columbus, and ratified by Christopher and his next brother Giovanni.<sup>2</sup> Both brothers must then have attained

Date of the  
birth of  
Columbus:  
archives of  
Savona.

<sup>1</sup> Washington Irving's *Life of Columbus*, says HARRISSE, "is a history written with judgment and impartiality, which leaves far behind it all descriptions of the discovery of the New World published before or since." *Christophe Colomb*, tom. i. p. 136. Irving was the first to make use of the superb work of NAVARRETE, *Coleccion de los viages y descubrimientos que hicieron por mar los Españoles desde fines del siglo XV.*, Madrid, 1825-37, 5 vols. 4to. Next followed Alexander von Humboldt, with his *Examen critique de l'histoire de la géographie de Nouveau Continent*, Paris, 1836-39, 5 vols. 8vo. This monument of gigantic erudition (which, unfortunately, was never completed) will always remain indispensable to the historian.

<sup>2</sup> HARRISSE, *op. cit.* tom. i. p. 196.

their majority, which in the republic of Genoa was fixed at the age of twenty-five. Christopher, therefore, can hardly have been less than seven and twenty, so that the latest probable date for his birth is 1446, and this is the date accepted by Muñoz, Major, HARRISSE, and AVEZAC. There is no documentary proof, however, to prevent our taking an earlier date; and the curate of Los Palacios — strong authority on such a point — says Statement of Bernaldez. expressly that at the time of his death, in 1506, Columbus was “in a good old age, seventy years a little more or less.”<sup>1</sup> Upon this statement NAVARRETE and HUMBOLDT have accepted 1436 as the probable date of birth.<sup>2</sup> The most plausible objection to this is a statement made by Columbus himself in a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, written in 1501. In this letter, as first given in the biography by his son, Columbus says that he was of “very tender age” when he began to sail the seas, an occupation which he has kept up until the present moment; and in the next sentence but one he adds that “now for forty years I have been

<sup>1</sup> “In *senectute bona*, de edad de setenta años poco mas o menos.” Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, tom. i. p. 334.

<sup>2</sup> M. d’Avezac (*Canevas chronologique*, etc.) objects to this date that we have positive documentary evidence of the birth of Christopher’s youngest brother Giacomo (afterwards spanished into Diego) in 1468, which makes an interval of 32 years; so that if the mother were (say) 18 in 1436 she must have borne a child at the age of 50. That would be unusual, but not unprecedented. But M. HARRISSE (tom. ii. p. 214), from a more thorough sifting of this documentary evidence, seems to have proved that while Giacomo cannot have been born later than 1468 he may have been born as early as 1460; so that whatever is left of M. d’Avezac’s objection falls to the ground.

in this business and have gone to every place where there is any navigation up to the present time.”<sup>1</sup> The expression “very tender age” agrees with Ferdinand’s statement that his father was fourteen years old when he first took to the sea.<sup>2</sup> Since  $1446 + 14 + 40 = 1500$ , it is argued that Columbus was probably born about 1446; some sticklers for extreme precision say 1447. But now there were eight years spent by Columbus in Spain, from 1484 to 1492, without any voyages at all; they were years, as he forcibly says, “dragged out in disputations.”<sup>3</sup> Did he mean to include those eight years in his forty spent upon the sea? Navarrete thinks he did not. When he wrote under excitement, as in this letter, his language was apt to be loose, and it is fair to construe it according to the general probabilities of the case. This addition of eight years brings his statement substantially into harmony with that of Bernaldez, which it really will not do to set aside lightly. Moreover, in the original text of the letter, since published by Navarrete, Columbus appears to say, “now for *more than* forty years,” so that the agreement with Bernaldez becomes practically complete.<sup>4</sup> The good curate

Columbus's  
letter of Sep-  
tember, 1501.

<sup>1</sup> “Serenissimi principi, di età molto tenera io entrai in mare navigando, et vi ho continovato fin’ hoggi: . . . et hoggimai pasano quaranta anni che io uso per tutte quelle parti che fin hoggi si navigano.” *Vita dell’ Ammiraglio*, cap. iv.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* cap. iv. *ad fin.*

<sup>3</sup> “Traido en disputas,” Navarrete, *Coleccion*, tom. ii. p. 254.

<sup>4</sup> “Muy altos Reyes, de muy pequeña edad entré en la mar navegando, é lo he continuado fasta hoy. . . . Yá pasan de cuarenta años que yo voy en este uso: todo lo que hoy se navega, todo lo he andado.” Navarrete, *Coleccion*, tom. ii. p. 262. Ob-

spoke from direct personal acquaintance, and his phrases "seventy years" and "a good old age" are borne out by the royal decree of February 23, 1505, permitting Columbus to ride on a mule, instead of a horse, by reason of his old age (*ancianidad*) and infirmities.<sup>1</sup> Such a phrase applies much better to a man of sixty-nine than to a man of fifty-nine. On the whole, I think that Washington Irving showed

The balance of probability is in favour of 1436.

serve the lame phrase "pasan de cuarenta;" what business has that "de" in such a place without "mas" before it? "Pasan mas de cuarenta," i. e. "more than forty;" writing in haste and excitement, Columbus left out a little word; or shall we blame the proof-reader? Avezac himself translates it "il y a plus de quarante ans," and so does Eugène Müller, in his French version of Ferdinand's book, *Histoire de la vie de Christophe Colomb*, Paris, 1879, p. 15.

<sup>1</sup> That was the golden age of sumptuary laws. Because Alfonso XI. of Castile (1312-1350), when he tried to impress horses for the army, found it hard to get as many as he wanted, he took it into his head that his subjects were raising too many mules and not enough horses. So he tried to remedy the evil by a wholesale decree prohibiting all Castilians from riding upon mules! In practice this precious decree, like other villainous prohibitory laws that try to prevent honest people from doing what they have a perfect right to do, proved so vexatious and ineffective withal that it had to be perpetually fussed with and tinkered. One year you could ride a mule and the next year you could n't. In 1492, as we shall see, Columbus immortalized one of these patient beasts by riding it a few miles from Granada. But in 1494 Ferdinand and Isabella decreed that nobody except women, children, and clergymen could ride on mules, — "dont la marche est beaucoup plus douce que celle des chevaux" (Humboldt, *Examen critique*, tom. iii. p. 338). This edict remained in force in 1505, so that the Discoverer of the New World, the inaugurator of the greatest historic event since the birth of Christ, could not choose an easy-going animal for the comfort of his weary old weather-shaken bones without the bother of getting a special edict to fit his case. *Eheu, quam parva sapientia regitur mundus!*

good sense in accepting the statement of the curate of Los Palacios as decisive, dating as it does the birth of Columbus at 1436, "a little more or less."

With regard to the place where the great discoverer was born there ought to be no dispute, since we have his own most explicit and unmistakable word for it, as I shall presently show. Nevertheless there has been no end of dispute. He has been claimed by as many places as Homer,<sup>1</sup> but the only real question is whether he was born in the city of Genoa or in some neighbouring village within the boundaries of the Genoese republic. It is easy to understand how doubt has arisen on this point, if we trace the changes of residence of his family. The grandfather of Columbus seems to have been Giovanni Colombo, of Terrarossa, an inland hamlet some twenty miles east by north from

<sup>1</sup> "Nous avons démontré l'inanité des théories qui le font naître à Pradello, à Cuccaro, à Cogoleto, à Savona, à Nervi, à Albisola, à Bogliasco, à Cosseria, à Finale, à Oneglia, voire même en Angleterre ou dans l'isle de Corse." HARRISSE, tom. i. p. 217. In Cogoleto, about sixteen miles west of Genoa on the Corniche road, the visitor is shown a house where Columbus is said first to have seen the light. Upon its front is a quaint inscription in which the discoverer is compared to the dove (*Colomba*) which, when sent by Noah from the ark, discovered dry land amid the waters: —

Con generoso ardir dall' Arca all' onde  
Ubbidente il vol Colomba prende,  
Corre, s' aggira, terren scopre, e fronde  
D' olivo in segno, al gran Noè ne rende.  
L' imita in ciò Colombo, ne' s' asconde,  
E da sua patria il mar solcando fende;  
Terreno al fin scoprendo diede fondo,  
Offerendo all' Ispano un Nuovo Mondo.

This house is or has been mentioned in Baedeker's *Northern Italy* as the probable birthplace, along with Peschel's absurd date 1456. It is pretty certain that Columbus was *not* born in that house or in Cogoleto. See HARRISSE, tom. i. pp. 148-155.

Genoa. Giovanni's son, Domenico Colombo, was probably born at Terrarossa, and moved thence with his father, somewhere between 1430 and 1445, to Quinto al Mare, four miles east of Genoa on the coast. All the family seem to have been weavers. Before 1445, but how many years before is not known, Domenico married Susanna Fontanarossa, who belonged to a family of weavers, probably of Quezzi, four miles northeast of Genoa. Between 1448 and 1451 Domenico, with his wife and three children, moved into the city of Genoa, where he became the owner of a house and was duly qualified as a citizen. In 1471 Domenico moved to Savona, thirty miles west on the Corniche road, where he set up a weaving establishment and also kept a tavern. He had then five children, Cristoforo, Giovanni, Bartolommeo, Giacomo, and a daughter. Domenico lived in Savona till 1484. At that time his wife and his son Giovanni were dead, Giacomo was an apprentice, learning the weaver's trade, Christopher and Bartholomew had long been domiciled in Portugal, the daughter had married a cheese merchant in Genoa, and to that city Domenico returned in the autumn of 1484, and lived there until his death, at a great age, in 1499 or 1500. He was always in pecuniary difficulties, and died poor and in debt, though his sons seem to have sent him from Portugal and Spain such money as they could spare.<sup>1</sup>

The family of Domenico Colombo, and its changes of residence.

The reader will observe that Christopher and his two next brothers were born before the family

<sup>1</sup> HARRISSE, tom. i. pp. 166-216.

went to live in the city of Genoa. It has hence been plausibly inferred that they were born either in Quinto or in Terrarossa; more likely the latter, since both Christopher and Bartholomew, as well as their father, were called, and sometimes signed themselves, Columbus of Terrarossa.<sup>1</sup> In this opinion the most indefatigable modern investigator, HARRISSE, agrees with Las Casas.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, in a solemn legal instrument executed February 22, 1498, establishing a *mayorazgo*, or right of succession to his estates and emoluments in the Indies, Columbus expressly declares

Christopher  
tells us that  
he was born in  
the city of  
Genoa.

that he was born in the city of Genoa: "I enjoin it upon my son, the said Don Diego, or whoever may inherit the said *mayorazgo*, always to keep and maintain in the City of Genoa one person of our lineage, because from thence I came and in it I was born."<sup>3</sup> I do not see how such a definite and positive statement, occurring in such a document, can be doubted or explained away. It seems clear that the son was born while the parents were dwelling either at

<sup>1</sup> HARRISSE, tom. i. p. 188; *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. xi.

<sup>2</sup> "Fué este varon escogido de nacion genovés, de algun lugar de la provincia de Génova; eual fuese, donde nació ó qué nombre tuvo el tal lugar, no consta la verdad dello más de que se solia llamar ántes que llegase al estado que llegó, Cristobal Colombo de Terra-rubia y lo mismo su hermano Bartolomé Colon." Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, tom. i. p. 42; cf. HARRISSE, tom. i. pp. 217-222.

<sup>3</sup> "Mando al dicho D. Diego, mi hijo, ó á la persona que heredare el dicho mayorazgo, que tenga y sostenga siempre en la Ciudad de Génova una persona de nuestro linage . . . pues que della salí y en ella nací" [*italics mine*]. Navarrete, *Coleccion*, tom. ii. p. 232.

Terrarossa or at Quinto, but what is to hinder our supposing that the event might have happened when the mother was in the city on some errand or visit? The fact that Christopher and his brother were often styled "of Terrarossa" does not prove that they were born in that hamlet. A family moving thence to Quinto and to Genoa would stand in much need of some such distinctive epithet, because the name Colombo was extremely common in that part of Italy; insomuch that the modern historian, who prowls among the archives of those towns, must have a care lest he get hold of the wrong person, and thus open a fresh and prolific source of confusion. This has happened more than once.

On the whole, then, it seems most probable that the Discoverer of America was born in the city of Genoa in 1436, or not much later. Of his childhood we know next to nothing. Las Casas tells us that he studied at the University of Pavia and acquired a good knowledge of Latin.<sup>1</sup> This has been doubted, as incompatible with the statement of Columbus that he began a seafaring life at the age of fourteen. It is clear, however, Christopher's early years. that the earlier years of Columbus, before his departure for Portugal, were not all spent in seafaring. Somewhere, if not at Pavia, he not only learned Latin, but found time to study geography, with a little astronomy and mathematics, and to become an expert draughtsman. He seems to have gone to and fro upon the Mediterranean in merchant voyages, now and then

<sup>1</sup> Las Casas, *Historia*, tom. i. p. 46.

taking a hand in sharp scrimmages with Mussulman pirates.<sup>1</sup> In the intervals of this adventurous life he was probably to be found in Genoa, earning his bread by making maps and charts, for which there was a great and growing demand. About 1470, having become noted for his skill in such work, he followed his younger brother Bartholomew to Lisbon,<sup>2</sup> whither Prince Henry's

<sup>1</sup> The reader must beware, however, of some of the stories of adventure attaching to this part of his life, even where they are confirmed by Las Casas. They evidently rest upon hearsay, and the incidents are so confused that it is almost impossible to extract the kernel of truth.

<sup>2</sup> The date 1470 rests upon a letter of Columbus to King Ferdinand of Aragon in May, 1505. He says that God must have directed him into the service of Spain by a kind of miracle, since he had already been in Portugal, whose king was more interested than any other sovereign in making discoveries, and yet God closed his eyes, his ears, and all his senses to such a degree that *in fourteen years* Columbus could not prevail upon him to lend aid to his scheme. "Dije milagrosamente porque fui á aportar á Portugal, adonde el Rey de allí entendia en el descubrir mas que otro: él le atajó la vista, oído y todos los sentidos, que en catorce años no le pude hacer entender lo que yo dije." Las Casas, *op. cit.* tom. iii. p. 187; Navarrete, tom. iii. p. 528. Now it is known that Columbus finally left Portugal late in 1484, or very early in 1485, so that fourteen years would carry us back to before 1471 for the first arrival of Columbus in that country. M. Harrissee (*op. cit.* tom. i. p. 263) is unnecessarily troubled by the fact that the same person was not king of Portugal during the whole of that period. Alfonso V. (brother of Henry the Navigator) died in 1481, and was succeeded by his son John II.; but during a considerable part of the time between 1475 and 1481 the royal authority was exercised by the latter. Both kings were more interested in making discoveries than any other European sovereigns. Which king did Columbus mean? Obviously his words were used loosely; he was too much preoccupied to be careful about trifles; he probably had John in his mind, and did not bother himself about Alfonso; King Ferdinand, to whom he was writing, did not need to have such points minutely specified, and

undertakings had attracted able navigators and learned geographers until that city had come to be the chief centre of nautical science in Europe.

could understand an elliptical statement; and the fact stated by Columbus was simply that during a residence of fourteen years in Portugal he had not been able to enlist even that enterprising government in behalf of his novel scheme.

In the town archives of Savona we find Christopher Columbus witnessing a document March 20, 1472, endorsing a kind of promissory note for his father August 26, 1472, and joining with his mother and his next brother Giovanni, August 7, 1473, in relinquishing all claims to the house in Genoa sold by his father Domenico by deed of that date. It will be remembered that Domenico had moved from Genoa to Savona in 1471. From these documents (which are all printed in his *Christophe Colomb*, tom. ii. pp. 419, 420, 424-426) M. HARRISSE concludes that Christopher cannot have gone to Portugal until after August 7, 1473. Probably not, so far as to be domiciled there; but inasmuch as he had long been a sailor, why should he not have been in Portugal, or upon the African coast in a Portuguese ship, in 1470 and 1471, and nevertheless have been with his parents in Savona in 1472 and part of 1473? His own statement "fourteen years" is not to be set aside on such slight grounds as this. Furthermore, from the fact that Bartholomew's name is not signed to the deed of August 7, 1473, M. HARRISSE infers that he was then a minor; i. e. under five and twenty. But it seems to me more likely that Bartholomew was already domiciled at Lisbon, since we are expressly told by two good contemporary authorities — both of them Genoese writers withal — that he moved to Lisbon and began making maps there at an earlier date than Christopher. See Antonio Gallo, *De navigatione Columbi per inaccessum antea Oceanum Commentariolus*, apud Muratori, tom. xxiii. col. 301-304; Giustiniani, *Psalterium*, Milan, 1516 (annotation to Psalm xix.); HARRISSE, *Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima*, No. 88. To these statements M. HARRISSE objects that he finds (in Belloro, *Notizie*, p. 8) mention of a document dated Savona, June 16, 1480, in which Domenico Colombo gives a power of attorney to his son Bartholomew to act for him in some matter. The document itself, however, is not forthcoming, and the notice cited by M. HARRISSE really affords no ground for the assumption that Bartholomew was in 1480 domiciled at Savona or at Genoa.

Las Casas assures us that Bartholomew was quite equal to Christopher as a sailor, and surpassed him in the art of making maps and globes, as well as in the beauty of his handwriting.<sup>1</sup> In Portugal, as before in Italy, the work of the brothers Columbus was an alternation of map-making on land and adventure on the sea. We have Christopher's own word for it that he sailed with more than one of those Portuguese expeditions down the African coast; <sup>2</sup> and I think it not altogether unlikely that he may have been with Santarem and Escobar in their famous voyage of 1471.

He had not been long in Portugal before he found a wife. We have already met the able Italian navigator, Bartholomew Perestrelo, who was sent by Prince Henry to the island of Porto Santo with Zarco and Vaz, about 1425. In recognition of eminent services Prince Henry afterwards, in 1446, appointed him governor of Porto Santo. Perestrelo died in 1457, leaving a widow (his second wife, Isabella Moñiz) and a charming daughter Philippa,<sup>3</sup>

Philippa  
Moñiz de  
Perestrelo.

<sup>1</sup> Las Casas, *op. cit.* tom. i. p. 224; tom. ii. p. 80. He possessed many maps and documents by both the brothers.

<sup>2</sup> "Spesse volte navigando da Lisbona a Guinea," etc. *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. iv. The original authority is Columbus's marginal note in his copy of the *Imago Mundi* of Alliacus, now preserved in the Colombina at Seville: "Nota quod sepius navigando ex Ulixbona ad austrum in Guineam, notavi cum diligentia viam, etc. Compare the allusions to Guinea in his letters, Navarrete, *Coleccion*, tom. i. pp. 55, 71, 101.

<sup>3</sup> There are some vexed questions concerning this lady and the connections between the Moñiz and Perestrelo families, for which see HARRISSE, tom. i. pp. 267-292.

whom Columbus is said to have first met at a religious service in the chapel of the convent of All Saints at Lisbon. From the accounts of his personal appearance, given by Las Casas and others who knew him, we can well understand how Columbus should have won the heart of this lady, so far above him at that time in social position. He was a man of noble and commanding presence, tall and powerfully built, with fair ruddy complexion and keen blue-gray eyes that easily kindled; while his waving white hair must have been quite picturesque. His manner was at once courteous and cordial and his conversation charming, so that strangers were quickly won, and in friends who knew him well he inspired strong affection and respect.<sup>1</sup> There was an indefinable air of authority about him, as befitted a man of great heart and lofty thoughts.<sup>2</sup> Out of those kindling eyes looked a grand and poetic soul, touched with that divine spark of religious enthusiasm which makes true genius.

Personal appearance of Columbus.

The acquaintance between Columbus and Philippa Moñiz de Perestrelo was not long in ripening into affection, for they were married in 1473. As there was a small estate at Porto Santo, Columbus went home thither with his bride to live for a while in quiet and seclusion. Such repose we may believe to have been

His marriage, and life upon the island of Porto Santo.

<sup>1</sup> Las Casas, *Historia*, tom. i. p. 43. He describes Bartholomew as not unlike his brother, but not so tall, less affable in manner, and more stern in disposition, *id.* tom. ii. p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> "Christoval Colon . . . persona de gran corazon y altos pensamientos." Mariana, *Historia de España*, tom. viii. p. 341.

favourable to meditation, and on that little island, three hundred miles out on the mysterious ocean, we are told that the great scheme of sailing westward to the Indies first took shape in the mind of Columbus.<sup>1</sup> His father-in-law Perestrelo had left a quantity of sailing charts and nautical notes, and these Columbus diligently studied, while ships on their way to and from Guinea every now and then stopped at the island, and one can easily imagine the eager discussions that must have been held over the great commercial problem of the age, — how far south that African coast extended and whether there was any likelihood of ever finding an end to it.

How long Columbus lived upon Porto Santo is not known, but he seems to have gone from time to time back to Lisbon, and at length to have made his home — or in the case of such a rover we might better say his headquarters — in that city. We come now to a document of supreme importance for our narrative. Paolo del Pozzo dei Toscanelli, born at Florence in 1397, was one of the most famous astronomers and cosmographers of his time, a man to whom it was natural that questions involving the size and shape of the earth

<sup>1</sup> Upon that island his eldest son Diego was born. This whole story of the life upon Porto Santo and its relation to the genesis of Columbus's scheme is told very explicitly by Las Casas, who says that it was told to him by Diego Columbus at Barcelona in 1519, when they were waiting upon Charles V., just elected Emperor and about to start for Aachen to be crowned. And yet there are modern critics who are disposed to deny the whole story. (See Harisse, tom. i. p. 298.) The grounds for doubt are, however, extremely trivial when confronted with Las Casas, *Historia*, tom. i. p. 54.

should be referred. To him Alfonso V. of Portugal made application, through a gentleman of the royal household, Fernando Martinez, who happened to be an old friend of Toscanelli. What Alfonso

Alfonso V.  
asks advice of  
the great  
astronomer  
Toscanelli.

wanted to know was whether there could be a shorter oceanic route to the Indies than that which his captains were seeking by following the African coast; if so, he begged that Toscanelli would explain the nature and direction of such a route. The Florentine astronomer replied with the letter presently to be quoted in full, dated June 25, 1474; and along with the letter he sent to the king a sailing chart, exhibiting his conception of the Atlantic ocean, with Europe on the east and Cathay on the west. The date of this letter is eloquent. It was early in 1472 that Santarem and Escobar brought back to Lisbon the news that beyond the Gold Coast the African shore turned southwards and stretched away in that direction beyond the equator. As I have already observed, this was the moment when the question as to the possibility of a shorter route was likely to arise;<sup>1</sup> and this is precisely the question we find the king of Portugal putting to Toscanelli some time before the middle of 1474. Now about this same time, or not long afterwards, we find Columbus himself appealing to Toscanelli. An aged Florentine merchant, Lorenzo Giraldi, then settled in Lisbon, was going back to his native city for a visit, and to him Columbus entrusted a letter for the eminent astronomer. He received the following answer:

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 330.

“Paul, the physicist, to Christopher Columbus greeting.<sup>1</sup> I perceive your great and noble desire to go to the place where the spices grow; wherefore in reply to a letter of yours, I send you a copy of another letter, which I wrote a few days ago [or some time ago] to a friend of mine, a gentleman of the household of the most gracious king of Portugal before the wars of Castile,<sup>2</sup> in reply to another, which by command of His Highness he wrote me concerning that matter: and I send you another sailing chart, similar to the one I sent him, by which your demands will be satisfied. The copy of that letter of mine is as follows:—

Toscanelli's  
first letter to  
Columbus.

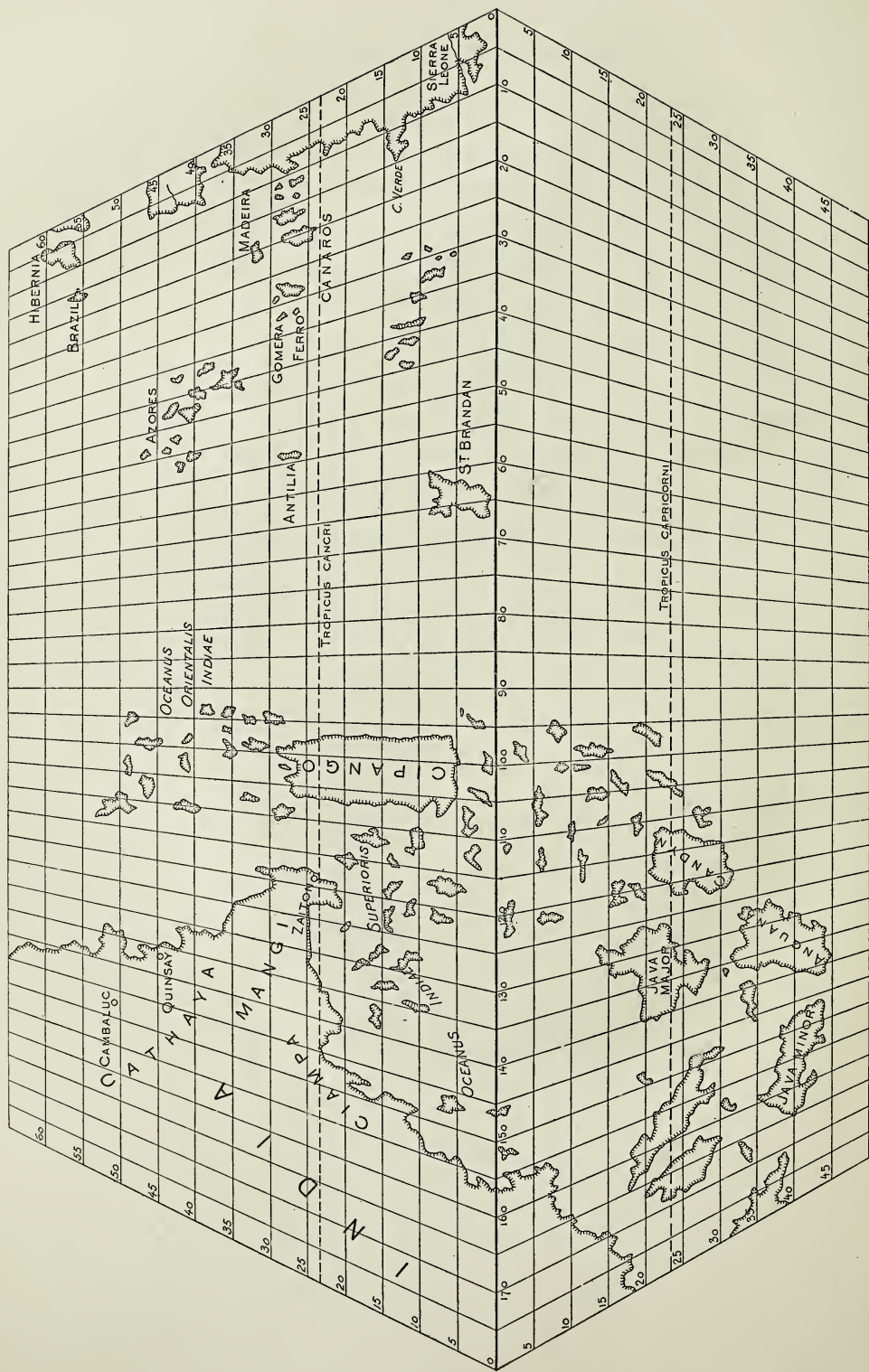
“‘Paul, the physicist, to Fernando Martinez, canon, at Lisbon, greeting.<sup>3</sup> I was glad to hear

<sup>1</sup> I translate this prologue from the Italian text of the *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. viii. The original Latin has nowhere been found. A Spanish version of the whole may be found in Las Casas, *Historia*, tom. i. pp. 92–96. Las Casas, by a mere slip of the pen, calls “Paul, the physicist,” *Marco Paulo*, and fifty years later Mariana calls him *Marco Polo, physician*: “por aviso que le dió un cierto Marco Polo médico Florentin,” etc. *Historia de España*, tom. viii. p. 343. Thus step by step doth error grow.

<sup>2</sup> He means that his friend Martinez has been a member of King Alfonso's household ever since the time before the civil wars that began with the attempted deposition of Henry IV. in 1465 and can hardly be said to have come to an end before the death of that prince in December, 1474. See Humboldt, *Examen critique*, tom. i. p. 225.

<sup>3</sup> I translate this enclosed letter from the original Latin text, as found, a few years ago, in the handwriting of Columbus upon the fly-leaves of his copy of the *Historia rerum ubique gestarum* of Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pope Pius II.), published at Venice in 1477, in folio, and now preserved in the Colombina at Seville. This Latin text is given by HARRISSE, in his *Fernand Colomb*, pp. 178–180, and also (with more strict regard to the





SKETCH OF TOSCANELLI'S MAP, SENT TO PORTUGAL IN 1474, AND USED BY COLUMBUS IN HIS FIRST VOYAGE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

of your intimacy and favour with your most noble and illustrious king. I have formerly spoken with you about a shorter route to the places of Spices by ocean navigation than that which you are pursuing by Guinea. The most gracious king now desires from me some statement, or rather an exhibition to the eye, so that even slightly educated persons can grasp and comprehend that route. Although I am well aware that this can be proved from the spherical shape of the earth, nevertheless, in order to make the point clearer and to facilitate the enterprise, I have decided to exhibit that route by means of a sailing chart. I therefore send to his majesty a chart made by my own hands,<sup>1</sup> upon which are laid down your coasts, and

Toscanelli's copy of his former letter to Martinez — enclosed in his first letter to Columbus.

abbreviations of the original) in his *Bibliotheca Americana Vetusissima — Additions*, Paris, 1872, pp. xvi.-xviii. Very likely Columbus had occasion to let the original MS. go out of his hands, and so preserved a copy of it upon the fly-leaves of one of his books. These same fly-leaves contain extracts from Josephus and Saint Augustine. The reader will rightly infer from my translation that the astronomer's Latin was somewhat rugged and lacking in literary grace. Apparently he was anxious to jot down quickly what he had to say, and get back to his work.

<sup>1</sup> A sketch of this most memorable of maps is given opposite. Columbus carried it with him upon his first voyage, and shaped his course in accordance with it. Las Casas afterwards had it in his possession (*Hist. de las Indias*, tom. i. pp. 96, 279). It has since been lost, that is to say, it may still be in existence, but nobody knows where. But it has been so well described that the work of restoring its general outlines is not difficult and has several times been done. The sketch here given is taken from Winsor (*Narr. and Crit. Hist.*, ii. 103), who takes it from *Das Ausland*, 1867, p. 5. Another restoration may be found in St. Martin's *Atlas*, pl. ix. This map was the source of the western part of Martin Behaim's globe, as given below, p. 422.

the islands from which you must begin to shape your course steadily westward, and the places at which you are bound to arrive, and how far from the pole or from the equator you ought to keep away, and through how much space or through how many miles you are to arrive at places most fertile in all sorts of spices and gems; and do not wonder at my calling *west* the parts where the spices are, whereas they are commonly called *east*, because to persons sailing persistently westward those parts will be found by courses on the under side of the earth. For if [you go] by land and by routes on this upper side, they will always be found in the east. The straight lines drawn lengthwise upon the map indicate distance from east to west, while the transverse lines show distances from south to north. I have drawn upon the map various places upon which you may come, for the better information of the navigators in case of their arriving, whether through accident of wind or what not, at some different place from what they had expected; but partly in order that they may show the inhabitants that they have some knowledge of their country, which is sure to be a pleasant thing. It is said that none but merchants dwell in the islands.<sup>1</sup> For so great there is the number of navigators with their merchandise that in all the rest of the world there are not so many as in one very splendid port called Zaiton.<sup>2</sup> For they say that a

<sup>1</sup> All the description that follows is taken by Toscanelli from the book of Marco Polo.

<sup>2</sup> On modern maps usually called Chang-chow, about 100 miles S. W. from Fou-chow.

hundred great ships of pepper unload in that port every year, besides other ships bringing other spices. That country is very populous and very rich, with a multitude of provinces and kingdoms and cities without number, under one sovereign who is called the Great Khan, which name signifies King of Kings, whose residence is for the most part in the province of Cathay. His predecessors two hundred years ago desired an alliance with Christendom; they sent to the pope and asked for a number of persons learned in the faith, that they might be enlightened; but those who were sent, having encountered obstacles on the way, returned.<sup>1</sup> Even in the time of Eugenius<sup>2</sup> there came one to Eugenius and made a declaration concerning their great goodwill toward Christians, and I had a long talk with him about many things, about the great size of their royal palaces and the remarkable length and breadth of their rivers, and the multitude of cities on the banks of the rivers, such that on one river there are about two hundred cities, with marble bridges very long and wide and everywhere adorned with columns. This country is worth seeking by the Latins, not only because great treasures may be obtained from it, — gold, silver, and all sorts of jewels and spices, — but on account of its learned men, philosophers, and skilled astrologers, and [in order that we may see] with what arts and devices so powerful and splendid a province is governed, and also [how] they conduct their wars. This for some sort of answer

<sup>1</sup> I have given an account of this mission, above, p. 281.

<sup>2</sup> Eugenius IV., pope from 1431 to 1447.

to his request, so far as haste and my occupations have allowed, ready in future to make further response to his royal majesty as much as he may wish. Given at Florence 25th June, 1474.'

"From<sup>1</sup> the city of Lisbon due west there are 26 spaces marked on the map, each of which contains 250 miles, as far as the very great and splendid city of Quinsay.<sup>2</sup> For it is a hundred miles in circumference and has ten bridges, and its name means City of Heaven, and many wonderful things are told about it and about the multitude of its arts and revenues. This space is almost a third part of the whole sphere. That city is in the province of Mangi, or near the province of Cathay in which land is the royal residence. But from the island of Antilia, which you know, to the very splendid island of

Conclusion of  
Toscanelli's  
first letter to  
Columbus.

<sup>1</sup> This paragraph is evidently the conclusion of the letter to Columbus, and not a part of the letter to Martinez, which has just ended with the date. In *Vita dell' Ammiraglio* the two letters are mixed together.

<sup>2</sup> On modern maps Hang-chow. After 1127 that city was for some time the capital of China, and Marco Polo's name *Quinsay* represents the Chinese word *K'ing-sse* or "capital," now generally applied to Peking. Marco Polo calls it the finest and noblest city in the world. It appears that he does not overstate the circumference of its walls at 100 Chinese miles or *li*, equivalent to about 30 English miles. It has greatly diminished since Polo's time, while other cities have grown. Toscanelli was perhaps afraid to repeat Polo's figure as to the number of stone bridges; Polo says there were 12,000 of them, high enough for ships to pass under! We thus see how his Venetian fellow-citizens came to nickname him "Messer Marco Milione." As Colonel Yule says, "I believe we must not bring Marco to book for the literal accuracy of his statements as to the bridges; but all travellers have noticed the number and elegance of the bridges of cut stone in this part of China." *Marco Polo*, vol. ii. p. 144.

Cipango<sup>1</sup> there are ten spaces. For that island abounds in gold, pearls, and precious stones, and they cover the temples and palaces with solid gold. So through the unknown parts of the route the stretches of sea to be traversed are not great. Many things might perhaps have been stated more clearly, but one who duly considers what I have said will be able to work out the rest for himself. Farewell, most esteemed one."

Some time after the receipt of this letter Columbus wrote again to Toscanelli, apparently sending him either some charts of his own, or some notes, or something bearing upon the subject in hand. No such letter is preserved, but Toscanelli replied as follows:—

"Paul, the physicist, to Christopher Columbus greeting.<sup>2</sup> I have received your letters, with the things which you sent me, for which I thank you very much. I regard as noble and grand your project of sailing from east to west according to the indications furnished by the map which I sent you, and which would appear still more plainly upon a sphere. I am much pleased to see that I have been well understood, and that the voyage has become not only possible

Toscanelli's  
second letter  
to Columbus.

<sup>1</sup> For Cipango, or Japan, see Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. ii. pp. 195–207. The venerable astronomer's style of composition is amusing. He sets out to demonstrate to Columbus that the part of the voyage to be accomplished through new and unfamiliar stretches of the Atlantic is not great; but he is so full of the glories of Cathay and Cipango that he keeps reverting to that subject, to the manifest detriment of his exposition. His argument, however, is perfectly clear.

<sup>2</sup> The original of this letter is not forthcoming. I translate from *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. viii.

but certain,<sup>1</sup> fraught with honour as it must be, and inestimable gain, and most lofty fame among all Christian people. You cannot take in all that it means except by actual experience, or without such copious and accurate information as I have had from eminent and learned men who have come from those places to the Roman court, and from merchants who have traded a long time in those parts, persons whose word is to be believed (*persone di grande autorità*). When that voyage shall be accomplished, it will be a voyage to powerful kingdoms, and to cities and provinces most wealthy and noble, abounding in all sorts of things most desired by us; I mean, with all kinds of spices and jewels in great abundance. It will also be advantageous for those kings and princes who are eager to have dealings and make alliances with the Christians of our countries, and to learn from the erudite men of these parts,<sup>2</sup> as well in religion as in all other branches of knowledge. For these reasons, and many others that might be mentioned, I do not wonder that you, who are of great courage, and the whole Portuguese nation, which has always had men distinguished in all such enterprises, are now inflamed with desire<sup>3</sup> to execute the said voyage."

<sup>1</sup> Yet poor old Toscanelli did not live to see it accomplished; he died in 1482, before Columbus left Portugal.

<sup>2</sup> That is, of Europe, and especially of Italy. Toscanelli again refers to Kublai Khan's message to the pope which — more or less mixed up with the vague notions about Prester John — had evidently left a deep impression upon the European mind. In translating the above sentence I have somewhat retrenched its excessive verbiage without affecting the meaning.

<sup>3</sup> In including the "whole Portuguese nation" as feeling this

These letters are intensely interesting, especially the one to Martinez, which reveals the fact that as early as 1474 the notion that a westward route to the Indies would be shorter than the southward route had somehow been suggested to Alfonso V.; and had, moreover, sufficiently arrested his attention to lead him to make inquiries of the most eminent astronomer within reach. Who could have suggested this notion to the king of Portugal? Was it Columbus, the trained mariner and map-maker, who might lately have been pondering the theories of Ptolemy and Mela as affected by the voyage of Santarem and Escobar, and whose connection with the Moñiz and Perestrelo families would now doubtless facilitate his access to the court? On some accounts this may seem probable, especially if we bear in mind Columbus's own statement implying that his appeals to the crown dated almost from the beginning of his fourteen years in Portugal.

Who first suggested the feasibility of a westward route? Was it Columbus?

All the circumstances, however, seem to be equally consistent with the hypothesis that the first suggestion of the westward route may have come from Toscanelli himself, through the medium of the canon Martinez, who had for so many years been a member of King Alfonso's household. The words at the beginning of the letter lend some probability to this view: "I have formerly spoken with you about a shorter route to the places of Spices by desire, the good astronomer's enthusiasm again runs away with him.

Perhaps it was Toscanelli.

ocean navigation than that which you are pursuing by Guinea." It was accordingly earlier than 1474 — how much earlier does not appear — that such discussions between Toscanelli and Martinez must probably have come to the ears of King Alfonso ; and now, very likely owing to the voyage of Santarem and Escobar, that monarch began to think it worth while to seek for further information, "an exhibition to the eye," so that mariners not learned in astronomy like Toscanelli might "grasp and comprehend" the shorter route suggested. It is altogether probable that the Florentine astronomer, who was seventy-seven years old when he wrote this letter, had already for a long time entertained the idea of a westward route ; and a man in whom the subject aroused so much enthusiasm could hardly have been reticent about it. It is not likely that Martinez was the only person to whom he descanted <sup>1</sup> upon the glory

<sup>1</sup> Luigi Pulci, in his famous romantic poem published in 1481, has a couple of striking stanzas in which Astarotte says to Rinaldo that the time is at hand when Hercules shall blush to see how far beyond his Pillars the ships shall soon go forth to find another hemisphere, for although the earth is as round as a wheel, yet the water at any given point is a plane, and inasmuch as all things tend to a common centre so that by a divine mystery the earth is suspended in equilibrium among the stars, just so there is an antipodal world with cities and castles unknown to men of olden time, and the sun in hastening westwards descends to shine upon those peoples who are awaiting him below the horizon : —

Sappi che questa opinione è vana  
 Perchè più oltre navicar si puote,  
 Però che l' acqua in ogni parte è piana,  
 Benchè la terra abbi forma di ruote ;  
 Era più grossa allor la gente umana,  
 Tal che potrebbe arrossirne le gote  
 Ercole ancor, d' aver posti que' segni,  
 Perchè più oltre passeranno i legni.

and riches to be found by sailing "straight to Cathay," and there were many channels through which Columbus might have got some inkling of his views, even before going to Portugal.

However this may have been, the letter clearly proves that at that most interesting period, in or about 1474, Columbus was already meditating upon the westward route.<sup>1</sup> Whether he owed the

E puossi andar giù nell' altro emisferio,  
 Però che al centro ogni cosa reprime :  
 Sicchè la terra per divin misterio  
 Sospesa sta fra le stelle sublime,  
 E laggiù son città, castella, e imperio ;  
 Ma nol cognobbon quelle gente prime.  
 Vedì che il sol di camminar s' affretta,  
 Dove io dico che laggiù s' aspetta.

Pulci, *Morgante Maggioro*, xxv. 229, 230.

This prophecy of western discovery combines with the astronomical knowledge here shown, to remind us that the Florentine Pulci was a fellow-townsmen and most likely an acquaintance of Toscanelli.

<sup>1</sup> It was formerly assumed, without hesitation, that the letter from Toscanelli to Columbus was written and sent in 1474. The reader will observe, however, that while the enclosed letter to Martinez is dated June 25, 1474, the letter to Columbus, in which it was enclosed, has no date. But according to the text as given in *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. viii., this would make no difference, for the letter to Columbus was sent only a few days later than the original letter to Martinez: "I send you a copy of another letter, which I wrote a few days ago (*alquanti giorni fa*) to a friend of mine, a gentleman of the household of the king of Portugal before the wars of Castile, in reply to another," etc. This friend, Martinez, had evidently been a gentleman of the household of Alfonso V. since before the civil wars of Castile, which in 1474 had been going on intermittently for nine years under the feeble Henry IV., who did not die until December 12, 1474. Toscanelli apparently means to say "a friend of mine who has for ten years or more been a gentleman of the royal household," etc.; only instead of mentioning the number of years, he alludes less precisely (as most people, and perhaps especially old people, are apt to do) to the most notable, mentionable, and glaring fact in

idea to Toscanelli, or not, is a question of no great importance so far as concerns his own originality; for the idea was already in the air. The originality of Columbus did not consist in his conceiving the

The idea was suggested by the globular form of the earth;

the history of the Peninsula for that decade, — namely, the civil wars of Castile. As if an American writer in 1864 had said, “a friend of mine, who has been secretary to A. B. since before the war,” instead of saying “for four years or more.” This is the only reasonable interpretation of the phrase as it stands above, and it was long ago suggested by Humboldt (*Examen critique*, tom. i. p. 225). Italian and Spanish writers of that day, however, were lavish with their commas and sprinkled them in pretty much at haphazard. In this case Ferdinand’s translator, Ulloa, sprinkled in one comma too many, and it fell just in front of the clause “before the wars of Castile;” so that Toscanelli’s sentence was made to read as follows: “I send you a copy of another letter, which I wrote a few days ago to a friend of mine, a gentleman of the household of the king of Portugal, before the wars of Castile, in reply to another,” etc. Now this unhappy comma, coming after the word “Portugal,” has caused ream after ream of good paper to be inked up in discussion, for it has led some critics to understand the sentence as follows: “I send you a copy of another letter, which I wrote a few days ago, before the wars of Castile, to a friend of mine,” etc. This reading brought things to a pretty pass. Evidently a letter dated June 25, 1474, could not have been written before the civil wars of Castile, which began in 1465. It was therefore assumed that the phrase must refer to the “War of Succession” between Castile and Portugal (in some ways an outgrowth from the civil wars of Castile) which began in May, 1475, and ended in September, 1479. M. d’Avezac thinks that the letter to Columbus must have been written after the latter date, or more than five years later than the enclosed letter. M. HARRISSE is somewhat less exacting, and is willing to admit that it may have been written at any time after this war had fairly begun, — say in the summer of 1475, not more than a year or so later than the enclosed letter. Still he is disposed on some accounts to put the date as late as 1482. The phrase *al-quantı giorni fa* will not allow either of these interpretations. It means “a few days ago,” and cannot possibly mean a year ago, still less five years ago. The Spanish retranslator from Ulloa

possibility of reaching the shores of Cathay by sailing west, but in his conceiving it in such distinct

renders it exactly *algunos dias há* (Navarrete, *Coleccion*, tom. ii. p. 7), and Humboldt (*loc. cit.*) has it *il y a quelques jours*. If we could be sure that the expression is a correct rendering of the lost Latin original, we might feel sure that the letter to Columbus must have been written as early as the beginning of August, 1474. But now the great work of Las Casas, after lying in manuscript for 314 years, has at length been published in 1875. Las Casas gives a Spanish version of the Toscanelli letters (*Historia de las Indias*, tom. i. pp. 92-97), which is unquestionably older than Ulloa's Italian version, though perhaps not necessarily more accurate. The phrase in Las Casas is not *algunos dias há*, but *há dias*, i. e. not "a few days ago," but "some time ago." Just which expression Toscanelli used cannot be determined unless somebody is fortunate enough to discover the lost Latin original. The phrase in Las Casas admits much more latitude of meaning than the other. I should suppose that *há dias* might refer to an event a year or two old, which would admit of the interpretation considered admissible by M. Harrisse. I should hardly suppose that it could refer to an event five or six years old; if Toscanelli had been referring in 1479 or 1480 to a letter written in 1474, his phrase would probably have appeared in Spanish as *algunos años há*, i. e. "a few years ago," not as *há dias*. M. d'Avezac's hypothesis seems to me not only inconsistent with the phrase *há dias*, but otherwise improbable. The frightful anarchy in Castile, which began in 1465 with the attempt to depose Henry IV. and alter the succession, was in great measure a series of ravaging campaigns and raids, now more general, now more local, and can hardly be said to have come to an end before Henry's death in 1474. The war which began with the invasion of Castile by Alfonso V. of Portugal, in May, 1475, was simply a later phase of the same series of conflicts, growing out of disputed claims to the crown and rivalries among great barons, in many respects similar to the contemporary anarchy in England called the Wars of the Roses. It is not likely that Toscanelli, writing at any time between 1475 and 1480, and speaking of the "wars of Castile" in the plural, could have had 1474 in his mind as a date previous to those wars; to his mind it would have rightly appeared as a date in the midst of them. In any case, therefore, his reference must be to a time before 1465, and Humboldt's interpretation is in all

and practical shape as to be ready to make the adventure in his own person. As a matter of theory the possibility of such a voyage could not fail to be suggested by the globular form of the earth; and ever since the days of Aristotle that had been generally admitted by men learned in physical science. Aristotle proved, from the different altitudes of the pole-star in different places, that the earth must necessarily be a globe. Moreover, says Aristotle, "some stars are seen in Egypt or at Cyprus, but are not seen in the countries to the north of these; and the stars that in the north are visible while they make a complete circuit, there undergo a setting. So that from this it is manifest, not only that the form of the earth is round, but also that it is part of not a very large sphere; for otherwise the difference would not be so obvious to persons making so small a change of place. Wherefore we may judge that *those persons who connect the region in the neighbourhood of the Pillars of Hercules with that towards India, and who assert that in this way the sea is ONE*, do not assert things very improbable." <sup>1</sup> It

probability correct. The letter from Toscanelli to Columbus was probably written within a year or two after June 25, 1474.

On account of the vast importance of the Toscanelli letters, and because the early texts are found in books which the reader is not likely to have at hand, I have given them entire in the Appendix at the end of this work.

<sup>1</sup> "Ὡστε τὰ ὑπὲρ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἄστρα μεγάλην ἔχειν τὴν μεταβολὴν, καὶ μὴ ταῦτα φαίνεσθαι πρὸς ἄρκτον τε καὶ μεσημβρίαν μεταβαίνουσιν· ἔνιοι γὰρ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ μὲν ἀστέρες ὀρῶνται, καὶ περὶ Κύπρον· ἐν τοῖς πρὸς ἄρκτον δὲ χωρίοις οὐχ ὀρῶνται καὶ τὰ διὰ παντὸς ἐν τοῖς πρὸς ἄρκτον φαινόμενα τῶν ἀστρῶν, ἐν ἐκείνοις τοῖς τόποις ποιεῖται δύσιν. Ὡστ' οὐ μόνον ἐκ τούτων δῆλον περιφερὲς δὲ τὸ σχῆμα

thus appears that more than eighteen centuries before Columbus took counsel of Toscanelli, "those persons" to whom Aristotle alludes were discussing, as a matter of theory, this same subject. Eratosthenes held that it would be easy enough to sail from Spain to India on the same parallel were it not for the vast extent of the Atlantic ocean.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Seneca maintained that the distance was probably not so very great, and that with favouring winds a ship might make the voyage in a few days.<sup>2</sup> In one of his tragedies Seneca has a striking passage<sup>3</sup> which has been repeatedly quoted as referring to the discovery of America, and is certainly one of

τῆς γῆς, ἀλλὰ καὶ σφαίρας οὐ μεγάλης. Οὐ γὰρ ἂν οὕτω ταχὺ ἐπιδήλον ἐποίει μεθιστεμένοις οὕτω βραχύ. Διὸ τοὺς ὑπολαμβάνοντας συνάπτειν τὸν περὶ τὰς Ἡρακλείους στήλας τόπον τῷ περὶ τὴν Ἰνδικήν, καὶ τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον εἶναι τὴν Θάλατταν μίαν, μὴ λίαν ὑπολαμβάνειν ἄπιστα δοκεῖν. Aristotle, *De Cælo*, ii. 14. He goes on to say that "those persons" allege the existence of elephants alike in Mauretania and in India in proof of their theory.

<sup>1</sup> "Ὦστ' εἰ μὴ τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ Ἀτλαντικοῦ πελάγους ἐκώλυε, καὶ πλεῖν ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς Ἰβηρίας εἰς τὴν Ἰνδικὴν διὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ παραλλήλου. Strabo, i. 4, § 6.

<sup>2</sup> "Quantum enim est, quod ab ultimis litoribus Hispaniæ usque ad Indos jacet? Paucissimorum dierum spatium, si navem suus ventus implevit." Seneca, *Nat. Quæst.*, i. præf. § 11.

<sup>3</sup> Venient annis sæcula seris,  
Quibus Oceanus vincula rerum  
Laxet, et ingens pateat tellus,  
Tethysque novos detegat orbes,  
Nec sit terris ultima Thule.

Seneca, *Medea*, 376.

In the copy of Seneca's tragedies, published at Venice in 1510, bought at Valladolid by Ferdinand Columbus in March, 1518, for 4 reals (plus 2 reals for binding), and now to be seen at the Biblioteca Colombina, there is a marginal note attached to these verses: "hæc prophetia expleta ē per patrē meū cristoforū colō almirantē anno 1492."

the most notable instances of prophecy on record. There will come a time, he says, in the later years, when Ocean shall loosen the bonds by which we have been confined, when an immense land shall lie revealed, and Tethys shall disclose new worlds, and Thule will no longer be the most remote of countries. In Strabo there is a passage, less commonly noticed, which hits the truth — as we know it to-day — even more closely. Having argued that the total length of the Inhabited World is only about a third part of the circumference of the earth in the temperate zone, he suggests it as possible, or even probable, that within this space there may be another Inhabited World, or even more than one; but such places would be inhabited by different races of men, with whom the geographer, whose task it is to describe the *known* world, has no concern.<sup>1</sup> Nothing could better illustrate the philosophical character of Strabo's mind. In such speculations, so far as his means of verification went, he was situated somewhat as we are to-day with regard to the probable inhabitants of Venus or Mars.

Early in the Christian era we are told by an

<sup>1</sup> Καλοῦμεν γὰρ οἰκουμένην ἣν οἰκοῦμεν καὶ γνωρίζομεν • ἐνδέκεται δὲ καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ εὐκράτῳ ζῶνῃ καὶ δύο οἰκουμένας εἶναι ἢ καὶ πλείους. Strabo, i. 4, § 6; καὶ γὰρ εἰ οὕτως ἔχει, οὐχ ὑπὸ τούτων γε οἰκεῖται τῶν παρ' ἡμῶν • ἀλλ' ἐκείνην ἄλλην οἰκουμένην θετέον. *Ἰδ. ii. 5, § 13.* This has always seemed to me one of the most remarkable anticipations of modern truth in all ancient literature. Mr. Bunbury thinks it may have suggested the famous verses of Seneca just quoted. *History of Ancient Geography*, vol. ii. p. 224.

eminent Greek astronomer that the doctrine of the earth's sphericity was accepted by all competent persons except the Epicureans.<sup>1</sup> Among the Fathers of the Church there was some difference of opinion; while in general they denied the existence of human beings beyond the limits of their Œcumene, or Inhabited World, this denial did not necessarily involve disbelief in the globular figure of the earth.<sup>2</sup> The views of the great mass of people, and of the more ignorant of the clergy, down to the time of Columbus, were probably well represented in the book of Cosmas Indicopleustes already cited.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless among the more enlightened clergy the views of the ancient astronomers were never quite forgotten, and in the great revival of intellectual life in the thirteenth century the doctrine of the earth's sphericity was again brought prominently into the foreground. We find Dante basing upon it the cosmical theory elaborated in his immortal poem.<sup>4</sup> In 1267 Roger Bacon — stimulated, no doubt, by the reports of the ocean east of Cathay — collected passages from ancient writers

Opinions of  
Christian  
writers.

Roger Bacon.

<sup>1</sup> Οἱ δὲ ἡμέτεροι [i. e. the Stoics] καὶ ἀπὸ μαθημάτων πάντες, καὶ οἱ πλείους τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ Σωκρατικοῦ διδασκαλείου σφαιρικὸν εἶναι τὸ σχῆμα τῆς γῆς διεβεβαίωσαντο. Cleomedes, i. 8; cf. Lucretius, *De Rerum Nat.*, i. 1052–1082; Stobæus, *Eclog.* i. 19; Plutarch, *De facie in Orbe Luna*, cap. vii.

<sup>2</sup> See Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, xvi. 9; Lactantius, *Inst. Div.*, iii. 23; Jerome, *Comm. in Ezechiel*, i. 6; Whewell's *History of the Inductive Sciences*, vol i. p. 196.

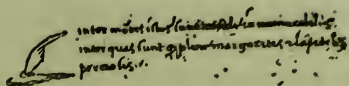
<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 266.

<sup>4</sup> For an account of the cosmography of the Divine Comedy, illustrated with interesting diagrams, see Artaud de Montor, *Histoire de Dante Alighieri*, Paris, 1841.

to prove that the distance from Spain to the eastern shores of Asia could not be very great. Bacon's argument and citations were copied in an extremely curious book, the "Imago Mundi," published in 1410 by the Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly, Bishop of Cambrai, better known by the Latinized form of his name as Petrus Alliacus. This treatise, which throughout the fifteenth century enjoyed a great reputation, was a favourite book with Columbus, and his copy of it, covered with marginal annotations in his own handwriting, is still preserved among the priceless treasures of the Biblioteca Colombina.<sup>1</sup> He found in it strong confirmation of his views, and it is not impossible that the reading of it may have first put such ideas into his head. Such a point, however, can hardly be determined. As I have already observed, these ideas were in the air. What Columbus did was not to originate them, but to incarnate them in facts and breathe into them the breath of life. It was one thing to suggest, as a theoretical

The "Imago  
Mundi" of  
Petrus  
Alliacus.

<sup>1</sup> It was first printed without indication of place or date, but probably the place was Paris and the date somewhere from 1483 to 1490. Manuscript copies were very common, and Columbus probably knew the book long before that time. There is a good account of it in Humboldt's *Examen critique*, tom. i. pp. 61-76, 96-108. Humboldt thinks that such knowledge as Columbus had of the opinions of ancient writers was chiefly if not wholly obtained from Alliacus. It is doubtful if Columbus had any direct acquaintance with the works of Roger Bacon, but he knew the *Liber Cosmographicus* of Albertus Magnus and the *Speculum Naturale* of Vincent de Beauvais (both about 1250), and drew encouragement from them. He also knew the book of Mandeville, first printed in French at Lyons in 1480, and a Latin translation of Marco Polo, published in 1485, a copy of which, with marginal MS. notes, is now in the Colombina.



referta Erisan et Argirem au-  
tem solus nuncq̃ carentem. ba-  
illustres Indos. Tetra-  
ta meat fruges vice hyemis  
et homines. dephantas in  
Ednuz quoq̃ lignū. et plu-  
ta preceles plurimos. Ibi  
dones et griffes ac immenso  
India valde magna ē. Naz  
ta est terra pars habitabi-  
ipse dicat Europaz esse ma-  
Dico igit̃ q̃ fons Indie  
propter regionem Natha-  
az maris magnū descende-  
tam inferiorem seu Africaz  
is Indie descendit a tropi-  
uo montem Adaleū. et regi-  
e nunc Arym vocatur. Nā  
est Syene. una sub solsti-  
tio de qua nunc est sermo.  
tici in medio habitationis  
occidēte septentrione et meri-  
dionis p̃nētis Hierusalē  
et salutem in medio terre.

re habitabilis ut ostendit  
nisi sicut supradictum est.  
alibz Indie. Ca. xvi.  
noia in q̃tate. Sed ex  
mirabiliū varietate. Nā  
sigmei duoz cubitorū  
partit̃ octauo semescunt.  
amen serpentū qui ibi  
acrobiū. xii. cubitoz lōgi-  
lasq̃ et ungues p̃ferunt

trapezianū h̃t griffes et elephos  
mīsa et argire nuro et argito  
ele. y.

india multas res h̃t et p̃p̃os  
aromaticos et lapides p̃ciosos  
plurimos et montes arborū et ip̃os  
terra p̃ habitabilis

+

fons indie descendit usq̃ ad  
ep̃icu cap. corni

ambit brachiū maris majo-  
india et ippania //

duplex ē fons una sub  
solisti alia sub. q̃p̃a;

falsitas ponit̃ hierusalē  
in medio terre

hōis duoz cubitoz p̃bitū ē  
griffes. Hic añ p̃t̃ s. sinas  
p̃p̃t albū  
ayacobi. i. z. cubitoz. Nā p̃t̃  
griffes

possibility, that Cathay might be reached by sailing westward ; and it was quite another thing to prove that the enterprise was feasible with the ships and instruments then at command.

The principal consideration, of course, was the distance to be traversed ; and here Columbus was helped by an error which he shared with many geographers of his day. He somewhat underestimated the size of the earth, and at the same time greatly overestimated the length of Asia. The first astronomer to calculate, by scientific methods, the circumference of our planet at the equator was Eratosthenes (B. C. 276-196), and he came — all things considered — fairly near the truth ; he made it 25,200 geographical miles (of ten stadia), or about one seventh too great. The true figure is 21,600 geographical miles, equivalent to 24,899 English statute miles.<sup>1</sup> Curiously enough, Posidonius, in revising this calculation a century later, reduced the figure to 18,000 miles, or about one seventh too small. The circumference in the latitude of Gibraltar he estimated at 14,000 miles ; the length of the *Œcumene*, or Inhabited World, he called 7,000 ; the distance across the Atlantic from the Spanish strand to the eastern shores of Asia was the other 7,000. The error of Posidonius was partially rectified by Ptolemy, who made the equatorial circumference 20,400 geographical miles, and

Ancient estimates of the size of the globe and the length of the *Œcumene*.

<sup>1</sup> See Herschel's *Outlines of Astronomy*, p. 140. For an account of the method employed by Eratosthenes, see Delambre, *Histoire de l'astronomie ancienne*, tom. i. pp. 86-91 ; Lewis, *Astronomy of the Ancients*, p. 198.

the length of a degree 56.6 miles.<sup>1</sup> This estimate, in which the error was less than one sixteenth, prevailed until modern times. Ptolemy also supposed the Inhabited World to extend over about half the circumference of the temperate zone, but the other half he imagined as consisting largely of bad lands, quagmires, and land-locked seas, instead of a vast and open ocean.<sup>2</sup>

Ptolemy's opinion as to the length of the Inhabited World was considerably modified in the minds of those writers who toward the end of the Middle Ages had been strongly impressed by the book of Marco Polo. Among these persons was Toscanelli. This excellent astronomer calculated the earth's equatorial circumference at almost exactly the true figure; his error was less than 124 English miles in excess. The circumference in the latitude of Lisbon he made  $26 \times 250 \times 3 = 19,500$  miles.<sup>3</sup> Two thirds of this figure, or 13,000 miles, he allowed

Toscanelli's  
calculation of  
the size of the  
earth,

<sup>1</sup> See Bunbury's *History of Ancient Geography*, vol. ii. pp. 95-97, 546-579; Müller and Donaldson, *History of Greek Literature*, vol. iii. p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> Strabo, in arguing against this theory of bad lands, etc., as obstacles to ocean navigation — a theory which seems to be at least as old as Hipparchus — has a passage which finely expresses the loneliness of the sea: — *Ὅτε γὰρ περιπλεῖν ἐπιχειρήσαντες, εἴτα ἀναστρέψαντες, οὐχ ὑπὸ ἡπείρου τινὸς ἀντιπιπτούσης καὶ κωλοῦσης, τὸν ἐπέκεινα πλοῦν ἀνακρουσθῆναι φασίν, ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ ἀπορίας καὶ ἐρημίας, οὐδὲν ἦττον τῆς θαλάττης ἐχούσης τὸν πόρον* (lib. i. cap. i. § 8). When one thinks of this ἀπορία and ἐρημία, one fancies oneself far out on the Atlantic, alone in an open boat on a cloudy night, bewildered and hopeless.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 360. Toscanelli's mile was nearly equivalent to the English statute mile. See the very important note in Winsor, *Narr. and Crit. Hist.*, vol. i. p. 51.

for the length of the *Æcumene*, from Lisbon eastward to Quinsay (i. e. Hang-chow), leaving 6,500 for the westward voyage from Lisbon to Quinsay. Thus Toscanelli elongated Asia by nearly the whole width of the Pacific ocean. His Quinsay would come about  $130^{\circ}$  W., a few hundred miles west of the mouth of the Columbia river. Zaiton (i. e. Chang-chow), the easternmost city in Toscanelli's China, would come not far from the tip end of Lower California. Thus the eastern coast of Cipango, about a thousand miles east from Zaiton, would fall in the Gulf of Mexico somewhere near the ninety-third meridian, and that island, being over a thousand miles in length north and south, would fill up the space between the parallel of New Orleans and that of the city of Guatemala. The westward voyage from the Canaries to Cipango, according to Toscanelli, would be rather more than 3,250 miles, but at a third of the distance out he placed the imaginary island of "Antilia," with which he seems to have supposed Portuguese sailors to be familiar.<sup>1</sup> "So through the unknown parts of the route," said the venerable astronomer, "the stretches of sea to be traversed are not great,"

and of the  
position of  
Cipango.

<sup>1</sup> The reader will also notice upon Toscanelli's map the islands of Brazil and St. Brandan. For an account of all these fabulous islands see Winsor, *Narr. and Crit. Hist.*, vol. i. pp. 46-51. The name of "Antilia" survives in the name "Antilles," applied since about 1502 to the West India islands. All the islands west of Toscanelli's ninetieth meridian belong in the Pacific. He drew them from his understanding of the descriptions of Marco Polo, Friar Odoric, and other travellers. These were the islands supposed, rightly, though vaguely, to abound in spices.

— not much more than 2,000 English miles, not so long as the voyage from Lisbon to the Guinea coast.

While Columbus attached great importance to these calculations and carried Toscanelli's map with him upon his first voyage, he improved somewhat upon the estimates of distance, and thus made his case still more hopeful. Columbus was not enough of an astronomer to adopt Toscanelli's improved measurement of the size of the earth. He accepted Ptolemy's figure of 20,400 geographical miles for the equatorial girth,<sup>1</sup> which would make the circumference in the latitude of

Columbus's opinion of the size of the globe, the length of the *Æcumene*, and the width of the Atlantic ocean.

<sup>1</sup> Columbus was confirmed in this opinion by the book of the Arabian astronomer Alfragan, written about A. D. 950, a Latin translation of which appeared in 1447. There is a concise summary of it in Delambre, *Histoire de l'astronomie du Moyen Age*, pp. 63-73. Columbus proceeded throughout on the assumption that the length of a degree at the equator is 56.6 geographical miles, instead of the correct figure 60. This would oblige him to reduce all Toscanelli's figures by about six per cent., to begin with. Upon this point we have the highest authority, that of Columbus himself, in an autograph marginal note in his copy of the *Imago Mundi*, where he expresses himself most explicitly: "Nota quod sepius navigando ex Ulixbona ad Austrum in Guineam, notavi cum diligentia viam, ut solitum naucleris et malineriis, et preterea accepi altitudinem solis cum quadrante et aliis instrumentis plures vices, et inveni concordare cum Alfragano, videlicet respondere quemlibet gradum milliariis 56 $\frac{3}{4}$ . Quare ad hanc mensuram fidem adhibendam. Tunc igitur possumus dicere quod circuitus Terræ sub aræ equinoctiali est 20,400 milliariorum. Similiter que id invenit magister Josephus phisicus et astrologus et alii plures missi specialiter ad hoc per serenissimum regem Portugalæ," etc.; *anglicè*, "Observe that in sailing often from Lisbon southward to Guinea, I carefully marked the course, according to the custom of skippers and mariners, and moreover I took the sun's altitude several times with a quadrant and other instru-

the Canaries about 18,000; and Columbus, on the strength of sundry passages from ancient authors which he found in Alliacus (cribbed from Roger Bacon), concluded that six sevenths of this circumference must be occupied by the Œcumene, including Cipango, so that in order to reach that wonderful island he would only have to sail over one seventh, or not much more than 2,500 miles from the Canaries.<sup>1</sup> An authority upon which he

ments, and in agreement with Alfragan I found that each degree [i. e. of longitude, measured on a great circle] answers to 56½ miles. So that one may rely upon this measure. We may therefore say that the equatorial circumference of the earth is 20,400 miles. A similar result was obtained by Master Joseph, the physicist [or, perhaps, physician] and astronomer, and several others sent for this special purpose by the most gracious king of Portugal." — Master Joseph was physician to John II. of Portugal, and was associated with Martin Behaim in the invention of an improved astrolabe which greatly facilitated ocean navigation. — The exact agreement with Ptolemy's figures shows that by a mile Columbus meant a geographical mile, equivalent to ten Greek stadia.

<sup>1</sup> One seventh of 18,000 is 2,571 geographical miles, equivalent to 2,963 English miles. The actual length of Columbus's first voyage, from last sight of land in the Canaries to first sight of land in the Bahamas, was according to his own dead reckoning about 3,230 geographical miles. See his journal in Navarrete, *Coleccion*, tom. i. pp. 6–20.

I give here in parallel columns the passage from Bacon and the one from Alliacus upon which Columbus placed so much reliance. In the Middle Ages there was a generous tolerance of much that we have since learned to stigmatize as plagiarism.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>From Roger Bacon, <i>Opus Majus</i> (A. D. 1267), London, 1733, ed. Jebb, p. 183: — "Sed Aristoteles vult in fine secundi Cœli et Mundi quod plus [terræ] habitetur quam quarta pars. Et Averroes hoc confirmat. Dicit</p> | <p>From Petrus Alliacus, <i>De imagine Mundi</i> (A. D. 1410), Paris, cir. 1490, cap. viii. fol. 13 b: — "Summus Aristoteles dicit quod mare parvum est inter finem Hispaniæ a parte occidentis et inter principium Indiæ</p> |
|---|---|

placed great reliance in this connection was the fourth book of Esdras, which although not a canonical part of the Bible was approved by holy men, and which ex-

*The fourth  
book of  
Esdras.*

Aristoteles quod mare parvum est inter finem Hispaniæ a parte occidentis et inter principium Indiæ a parte orientis. Et Seneca, libro quinto Naturalium, dicit quod mare hoc est navigabile in paucissimis diebus si ventus sit conveniens. Et Plinius docet in Naturalibus quod navigatum est a sinu Arabico usque ad Gades: unde refert quendam fugisse a rege suo præ timore et intravit sinum Maris Rubri . . . qui circiter spatium navigationis annualis distat a Mari Indico: . . . ex quo patet principium Indiæ in oriente multum a nobis distare et ab Hispania, postquam tantum distat a principio Arabiæ versus Indiam. A fine Hispaniæ sub terra tam parvum mare est quod non potest cooperire tres quartas terræ. Et hoc per auctoritatem alterius considerationis probatur. Nam Esdras dicit quarto libro, quod sex partes terræ sunt habitatæ et septima est cooperta aquis. Et ne aliquis impediatur hanc auctoritatem, dicens quod liber ille est apocryphus et ignotæ auctoritatis, dicendum est quod sancti habuerunt illum librum in usu et confirmant veritates sacras per illum librum."

a parte orientis, et vult quod plus habitetur quam quarta pars, et Averroes hoc confirmat. Insuper Seneca, libro quinto Naturalium, dicit quod mare est navigabile in paucis diebus si ventus sit conveniens. Et Plinius docet in Naturalibus, libro secundo, quod navigatum est a sinu Arabico usque ad Gades Herculis non multum magno tempore,

unde concludunt aliqui, quod mare non est tantum quod possit cooperire tres quartas terræ. Accedit ad hoc auctoritas Esdræ libro suo quarto, dicentis quod sex partes

terræ sunt habitatæ et septima est cooperta aquis,

cujus libri auctoritatem sancti habuerunt in reverentia."

Columbus must either have carried the book of Alliacus with

pressly asserted that six parts of the earth (i. e. of the length of the *Œcumene*, or north temperate zone) are inhabited and only the seventh part covered with water. From the general habit of Columbus's mind it may be inferred that it was chiefly upon this scriptural authority that he based his confident expectation of finding land soon after accomplishing seven hundred leagues from the Canaries. Was it not as good as written in the Bible that land was to be found there?

Thus did Columbus arrive at his decisive conclusion, estimating the distance across the Sea of Darkness to Japan at something less than the figure which actually expresses the distance to the West Indies. Many a hopeful enterprise has been ruined by errors in figuring, but this wrong cal-

him on his voyages, or else have read his favourite passages until he knew them by heart, as may be seen from the following passage of a letter, written from Hispaniola in 1498 to Ferdinand and Isabella (Navarrete, tom i. p. 261): — "El Aristotel dice que este mundo es pequeño y es el agua muy poca, y que facilmente se puede pasar de España à las Indias, y esto confirma el Avenryz [Averroes], y le alega el cardenal Pedro de Aliaco, autorizando este decir y aquel de Seneca, el qual conforma con estos. . . . À esto trae una autoridad de Esdras del tercero libro suyo, adonde dice que de siete partes del mundo las seis son descubiertas y la una es cubierta de agua, la cual autoridad es aprobada por Santos, los cuales dan autoridad al 3º é 4º libro de Esdras, así come es S. Agustin é S. Ambrosio en su *exámeron*," etc. — "Singular period," exclaims Humboldt, "when a mixture of testimonies from Aristotle and Averroes, Esdras and Seneca, on the small extent of the ocean compared with the magnitude of continental land, afforded to monarchs guarantees for the safety and expediency of costly enterprises!" *Cosmos*, tr. Sabine, vol. ii. p. 250. The passages cited in this note may be found in Humboldt, *Examen critique*, tom. i. pp. 65-69. Another interesting passage from *Imago Mundi*, cap. xv., is quoted on p. 73 of the same work.

culatation was certainly a great help to Columbus. When we consider how difficult he found it to obtain men and ships for a voyage supposed to be not more than 2,500

*Fortunate  
mixture of  
truth and  
error.*

miles in this new and untried direction, we must admit that his chances would have been poor indeed if he had proposed to sail westward on the Sea of Darkness for nearly 12,000 miles, the real distance from the Canaries to Japan. It was a case where the littleness of the knowledge was not a dangerous but a helpful thing. If instead of the somewhat faulty astronomy of Ptolemy and the very hazy notions prevalent about "the Indies," the correct astronomy of Toscanelli had prevailed and had been joined to an accurate knowledge of eastern Asia, Columbus would surely never have conceived his great scheme, and the discovery of America would probably have waited to be made by accident.<sup>1</sup> The whole point of his

scheme lay in its promise of a shorter route to the Indies than that which the Portuguese were seeking by way of Guinea. Unless it was probable that it could furnish such a shorter route, there was no reason for such an extraordinary enterprise.

*The whole  
point and  
purport of  
Columbus's  
scheme.*

The years between 1474 and 1480 were not favourable for new maritime ventures on the part of the Portuguese government. The war with Castile absorbed the energies of Alfonso V. as well as his money, and he was badly beaten into the bargain. About this time Columbus was writing a treatise

<sup>1</sup> See below, vol. ii. p. 96.

on "the five habitable zones," intended to refute the old notions about regions so fiery or so frozen as to be inaccessible to man.

Columbus's  
speculations  
on climate.

As this book is lost we know little or nothing of its views and speculations, but it appears that in writing it Columbus utilized sundry observations made by himself in long voyages into the torrid and arctic zones. He spent some time

His voyage  
to Guinea.

at the fortress of San Jorge de la Mina, on the Gold Coast, and made a study of that equinoctial climate.<sup>1</sup> This could not have been

earlier than 1482, the year in which the fortress was built. Five years before this he seems to have gone far in the opposite direction. In a fragment of a letter or diary, preserved by his son and by Las Casas, he says : — "In the month of February,

His voyage  
into the Arctic  
ocean, 1477.

1477, I sailed a hundred leagues beyond the island of Thule, [to ?] an island of which the south part is in latitude 73°, not 63°, as some say ; and it [i. e. Thule] does not lie within Ptolemy's western boundary, but much farther west. And to this island, which is as big as England, the English go with their wares, especially from Bristol. When I was there the sea was not frozen. In some places the tide rose and fell twenty-six fathoms. It is true that the Thule mentioned by Ptolemy lies where he says it does, and this by the moderns is called Frislanda." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. iv.; Las Casas, *Historia*, tom. i. p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> "Io navigai l' anno M CCCC LXXVII nel mese di Febraio oltra Tile isola cento leghe, la cui parte Australe è lontana dall' Equinoctiale settantatrè gradi, e non sessantatrè, come alcuni vogliono ; nè giace dentro della linea, che include l' Occidente di Tolomeo,

Taken as it stands this passage is so bewildering that we can hardly suppose it to have come in just this shape from the pen of Columbus. It looks as if it had been abridged from some diary of his by some person unfamiliar with the Arctic seas ; and I have ventured to insert in brackets a little preposition which may perhaps help to straighten out the meaning. By Thule Columbus doubtless means Iceland, which lies between latitudes  $64^{\circ}$  and  $67^{\circ}$ , and it looks as if he meant to say that he ran beyond it as far as the little island, just a hundred leagues from Iceland and in latitude  $71^{\circ}$ , since discovered by Jan Mayen in 1611. The rest of the paragraph is more intelligible. It is true that Iceland lies thirty degrees farther west than Ptolemy placed Thule ; and that for a century before the discovery of the Newfoundland fisheries the English did much fishing in the waters about Iceland,

He may have  
reached Jan  
Mayen island,

ma è molto più Occidentale. Et a questa isola, che è tanto grande, come l' Inghilterra, vanno gl' Inglesi con le loro mercatantie, specialmente quelli di Bristol. Et al tempo che io vi andai, non era congelato il mare, quantunque vi fossero sì grosse maree, che in alcuni luoghi ascendeva ventisei braccia, e discendeva altrettanti in altezza. È bene il vero, che Tile, quella, di cui Tolomeo fa mentione, giace dove egli dice ; & questa da' moderni è chiamata Frislanda." *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. iv. In the original edition of 1571, there are no quotation-marks ; and in some modern editions, where these are supplied, the quotation is wrongly made to end just before the last sentence, so as to make it appear like a gloss of Ferdinand's. This is, however, impossible. Ferdinand died in 1539, and the Zeno narrative of Frislanda was not published till 1558, so that the only source from which that name could have come into his book was his father's document. The genuineness of the passage is proved by its recurrence, almost word for word, in Las Casas, *Historia*, tom. i. p. 48.

and carried wares thither, especially from Bristol.<sup>1</sup> There can be no doubt that by Frislanda Columbus means the Færoe islands,<sup>2</sup> which do lie in the latitude though not in the longitude mentioned by Ptolemy. As for the voyage into the Jan Mayen waters in February, it would be dangerous but by no means impossible.<sup>3</sup> In another letter Columbus mentions visiting England, apparently in connection with this voyage,<sup>4</sup> and it is highly probable that he went in an English ship from Bristol.

The object of Columbus in making these long voyages to the equator and into the polar circle was, as he tells us, to gather observations upon climate. From the circumstance of his having made a stop at some point in Iceland, it was conjectured by Finn Magnusson that Columbus might have learned something about Vinland which served to guide him to his own enterprise or to encourage him in it. Starting from this suggestion, it has been argued<sup>5</sup> that Columbus must have read the geographical appendix to Adam of Bremen's "Ecclesiastical History;" that he must

and stopped  
at Iceland.

The hypothesis that Columbus "must have" heard and understood the story of the Vinland voyages.

<sup>1</sup> See Thorold Rogers, *The Economic Interpretation of History*, London, 1888, pp. 103, 319.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 236.

<sup>3</sup> See the graphic description of a voyage in these waters in March, 1882, in Nansen's *The First Crossing of Greenland*, London, 1890, vol. i. pp. 149-152.

<sup>4</sup> "E vidi tutto il Levante, e tutto il Ponente, che si dice per andare verso il Settentrione, cioè l' Inghilterra, e ho camminato per la Guinea." *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. iv.

<sup>5</sup> See Anderson's *America not discovered by Columbus*, Chicago, 1874; 3d ed. enlarged, Chicago, 1883.

have understood, as we now do, the reference therein made to Vinland; that he made his voyage to Iceland in order to obtain further information; that he there not only heard about Vinland and other localities mentioned in the sagas, but also mentally placed them about where they were placed in 1837 by Professor Rafn; that, among other things, he thus obtained a correct knowledge of the width of the Atlantic ocean in latitude 28° N.; and that during fifteen subsequent years of weary endeavour to obtain ships and men for his westward voyage, he sedulously refrained from using the most convincing argument at his command, — namely that land of continental dimensions had actually been found (though by a very different route) in the direction which he indicated.

I have already given an explanation of the process by which Columbus arrived at the firm belief that by sailing not more than about 2,500 geographical miles due west from the Canaries he should reach the coast of Japan. Every step of that explanation is sustained by documentary evidence, and as his belief is thus completely accounted for, the hypothesis that he may have based it upon information obtained in Iceland is, to say the least, superfluous. We do not need it in order to explain his actions, and accordingly his actions do not afford a presumption in favour of it. There is otherwise no reason, of course, for refusing to admit that he might have obtained information in Iceland, were there any evidence that he did. But not a scrap

That hypothesis has no evidence in its favour.

of such evidence has ever been produced. Every step in the Scandinavian hypothesis is a pure assumption.

First it is assumed that Columbus *must* have read the appendix to Adam of Bremen's history. But really, while it is not impossible that he should

It is not probable that Columbus knew of Adam of Bremen's allusion to Vinland,

have read that document, it is, on the whole, improbable. The appendix was first printed in Lindenbrog's edition, published at Leyden, in 1595. The eminent Norwegian historian, Gustav

Storm, finds that in the sixteenth century just six MSS. of Adam's works can now be traced. Of these, two were preserved in Denmark, two in Hamburg, one had *perhaps* already wandered southward to Leyden, and one as far as Vienna.

Dr. Storm, therefore, feels sure that Columbus never saw Adam's mention of Vinland, and pithily adds that "had

Columbus known it, it would not have been able to show him the way to the West Indies, but perhaps to the North Pole."<sup>1</sup> From the account of this mention and its context, which I have already given,<sup>2</sup> it is in the highest degree improbable that if Columbus had read the passage he could have understood it as bearing upon his own problem. There is, therefore, no ground for the

or that he would have understood it if he had read it.

<sup>1</sup> "Det er derfor sikkert, at Columbus ikke, som nogle har formodet, kan have kjendt Adam af Bremens Beretning om Vinland; vi kan gjerne tilføie, at havde Columbus kjendt den, vilde den ikke have kunnet vise ham Vei til Vesten (Indien), men kanske til Nordpolen." *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed*, 1887, ii. 2, p. 301.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 210.

assumption that Columbus went to Iceland in order to make inquiries about Vinland.

It may be argued that even if he did not go for such a purpose, nevertheless when once there he could hardly have failed incidentally to get the information. This, however, is not at all clear. Observe that our sole authority for the journey to Iceland is the passage above quoted at second-hand from Columbus himself; and there is nothing in it to show whether he staid a few hours or several weeks ashore, or met with any one likely to be possessed of the knowledge in question. The absence of any reference to Vinland in the Zeno narrative is an indication that the memory of it had faded away before 1400, and it was not distinctly and generally revived until the time of Torfæus in 1705.<sup>1</sup>

It is doubtful if Columbus would have stumbled upon the story in Iceland.

<sup>1</sup> In 1689 the Swedish writer, Ole Rudbeck, could not understand Adam of Bremen's allusion to Vinland. The passage is instructive. Rudbeck declares that in speaking of a wine-growing country near to the Arctic ocean, Adam must have been misled by some poetical or figurative phrase; he was deceived either by his trust in the Danes, or by his own credulity, for he manifestly refers to *Finland*, for which the form *Vinland* does not once occur in Sturleson, etc.: — "Ne tamen poetis solis hoc loquendi genus in suis regionum laudationibus familiare fuisse quis existimet, sacras adeat literas quæ Palæstinæ fœcunditatem appellatione *fluentorum lactis & mellis* designant. Tale aliquid, sine omne dubio, Adamo Bremensi quondam persuaserat insulam esse in ultimo septentrione sitam, mari glaciali vicinam, vini feracem, & ea propter fide tamen Danorum, *Vinlandiam* dictam prout ipse . . . fateri non dubitat. Sed deceptum eum hac sive Danorum fide, sive credulitate sua planum facit affine isti vocabulum *Finlandie* provinciæ ad Regnum nostrum pertinentis, pro quo apud Snorronem & in Hist. Regum non semel occurrit *Vinlandiæ* nomen, ejus promontorium ad ultimum septentrionem & usque ad mare glaciale sese extendit." Rudbeck, *Atlant eller Manheim*, Upsala, cir. 1689, p. 291.

But to hear about Vinland was one thing, to be guided by it to Japan was quite another affair. It was not the mention of timber and peltries and Skraelings that would fire the imagination of Columbus; his dreams were of stately cities with busy wharves where ships were laden with silks and jewels, and of Oriental magnates decked out with "barbaric pearl and gold," dwelling in pavilions of marble and jasper amid flowery gardens in "a summer fanned with spice." The mention of Vinland was no more likely to excite Columbus's attention than that of St. Brandan's isle or other places supposed to lie in the western ocean. He was after higher game.

If he had heard it, he would probably have classed it with such tales as that of St. Brandan's isle.

To suppose that Columbus, even had he got hold of the Saga of Eric the Red and conned it from beginning to end, with a learned interpreter at his elbow, could have gained from it a knowledge of the width of the Atlantic ocean, is simply preposterous. It would be impossible to extract any such knowledge from that document to-day without the aid of our modern maps. The most diligent critical study of all the Icelandic sources of information, with all the resources of modern scholarship, enables us with some confidence to place Vinland somewhere between Cape Breton and Point Judith, that is to say, somewhere between two points distant from each other more than four degrees in latitude and more than eleven degrees in longitude! When we have got thus far, knowing as we do that the coast in question be-

He could not have obtained from such a source his opinion of the width of the ocean.

longs to the same continental system as the West Indies, we can look at our map and pick up our pair of compasses and measure the width of the ocean at the twenty-eighth parallel. But it is not the mediæval document, but our modern map that guides us to this knowledge. And yet it is innocently assumed that Columbus, without any knowledge or suspicion of the existence of America, and from such vague data concerning voyages made five hundred years before his time, by men who had no means of reckoning latitude and longitude, could have obtained his figure of 2,500 miles for the voyage from the Canaries to Japan!<sup>1</sup> The fallacy here is that which underlies the whole Scandinavian hypothesis and many other fanciful geo-

<sup>1</sup> The source of such a confusion of ideas is probably the ridiculous map in Rafn's *Antiquitates Americane*, upon which North America is represented in all the accuracy of outline attainable by modern maps, and then the Icelandic names are put on where Rafn thought they ought to go, i. e. Markland upon Nova Scotia, Vinland upon New England, etc. Any person using such a map is liable to forget that it cannot possibly represent the crude notions of locality to which the reports of the Norse voyages must have given rise in an ignorant age. (The reader will find the map reproduced in Winsor, *Narr. and Crit. Hist.*, i. 95.) Rafn's fault was, however, no greater than that committed by the modern makers of so-called "ancient atlases" — still current and in use in schools — when, for example, they take a correct modern map of Europe, with parts of Africa and Asia, and upon countries so dimly known to the ancients as Scandinavia and Hindustan, but now drawn with perfect accuracy, they simply print the ancient names!! Nothing but confusion can come from using such wretched maps. The only safe way to study the history of geography is to reproduce the ancient maps themselves, as I have done in the present work. Many of the maps given below in the second volume will illustrate the slow and painful growth of the knowledge of the North American coast during the two centuries after Columbus.

graphical speculations. It is the fallacy of projecting our present knowledge into the past.

We have next to inquire, if Columbus had heard of Vinland and comprehended its relation to his own theory about land at the west, why in the

If he had known and understood the Vinland story, he had the strongest motives for proclaiming it and no motive for concealing it.

world should he have concealed this valuable knowledge? The notion seems to be that he must have kept it secret through an unworthy desire to claim a priority in discovery to which he knew that he was not entitled.<sup>1</sup> This is projecting our present knowledge into the past with a vengeance. Columbus never professed to have discovered America; he died in the belief that what he had done was to reach the eastern shores of Asia by a shorter route than the Portuguese. If he had reason to suppose that the Northmen had once come down from the Arctic seas to some unknown part of the Asiatic coast, he had no motive for concealing such a fact, but the strongest of motives for proclaiming it, inasmuch as it would have given him the kind of inductive argument which he sorely needed. The chief obstacle for Columbus was that for want of tangible evidence he was obliged to appeal to men's reason with scientific arguments. When you show things to young children they are not content with looking; they crave a more intimate acquaintance than the eyes alone can give, and so they reach out and

<sup>1</sup> "The fault that we find with Columbus is, that he was not honest and frank enough to tell where and how he had obtained his previous information about the lands which he pretended to discover." Anderson, *America not discovered by Columbus*, p. 90.

handle the things. So when ideas are presented to grown-up men, they are apt to be unwilling to trust to the eye of reason until it has been supplemented by the eye of sense ; and indeed in most affairs of life such caution is wholesome. The difference between Columbus and many of the "practical" men whom he sought to convince was that he could see with his mind's eye solid land beyond the Sea of Darkness while they could not. To them the ocean, like the sky, had nothing beyond, unless it might be the supernatural world.<sup>1</sup> For while the argument from the earth's rotundity was intelligible enough, there were few to whom, as to Toscanelli, it was a living truth. Even of those who admitted, in theory, that Cathay lay to the west of Europe, most deemed the distance untraversable. Inductive proof of the existence of accessible land to the west was thus what Columbus chiefly needed, and what he sought every opportunity to find and produce ; but it was not easy to find anything more substantial than sailors' vague mention of driftwood of foreign aspect or other outlandish jetsam washed up on the Portuguese strand.<sup>2</sup> What a

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 398, note.

<sup>2</sup> For example, the pilot Martin Vicenti told Columbus that 1,200 miles west of Cape St. Vincent he had picked up from the sea a piece of carved wood evidently not carved with iron tools. Pedro Correa, who had married Columbus's wife's sister, had seen upon Porto Santo a similar piece of carving that had drifted from the west. Huge reeds sometimes floated ashore upon those islands, and had not Ptolemy mentioned enormous reeds as growing in eastern Asia ? Pine-trees of strange species were driven by west winds upon the coast of Fayal, and two corpses of men of an unknown race had been washed ashore upon the neighbouring island of Flores. Certain sailors, on a voyage from the Azores to Ireland,

godsend it would have been for Columbus if he could have had the Vinland business to hurl at the heads of his adversaries! If he could have said, "Five hundred years ago some Icelanders coasted westward in the polar regions, and then coasted southward until they reached a country beyond the ocean and about opposite to France or Portugal; therefore that country must be Asia, and I can reach it by striking boldly across the ocean, which will obviously be shorter than going down by Guinea," — if he could have said this, he would have had precisely the unanswerable argument for lack of which his case was waiting and suffering. In persuading men to furnish hard cash for his commercial enterprise, as Colonel Higginson so neatly says, "an ounce of Vinland would have been worth a pound of cosmography."<sup>1</sup> We may be sure that the silence of Columbus about the Norse voyages proves that he knew nothing about them or quite failed to see their bearings upon his own undertaking. It seems to me absolutely decisive.

Furthermore, this silence is in harmony with the fact that in none of his four voyages across the Atlantic did Columbus betray any consciousness that there was anything for him to gain by steering toward the northwest. If he could correctly have conceived the position of Vinland he surely would not have conceived it as south of the for-

had caught glimpses of land on the west, and believed it to be the coast of "Tartary;" etc., etc. See *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. ix. Since he cited these sailors, why did he not cite the Northmen also, if he knew what they had done?

<sup>1</sup> *Larger History of the United States*, p. 54.

tieth parallel. On his first voyage he steered due west in latitude  $28^{\circ}$  because Toscanelli placed Japan opposite the Canaries. When at length some doubts began to arise and he altered his course, as we shall hereafter see, the change was toward the southwest. His first two voyages did not reveal to him the golden cities for which he was looking, and when on his third and fourth voyages he tried a different course it was farther toward the equator, not farther away from it, that he turned his prows. Not the slightest trace of a thought of Vinland appears in anything that he did.

No trace of a thought of Vinland appears in the voyages of Columbus.

Finally it may be asked, if the memory of Vinland was such a living thing in Iceland in 1477 that a visitor would be likely to be told about it, why was it not sufficiently alive in 1493 to call forth a protest from the North? When the pope, as we shall presently see, was proclaiming to the world that the Spanish crown was entitled to all heathen lands and islands already discovered or to be discovered in the ocean west of the Azores, why did not some zealous Scandinavian at once jump up and cry out, "Look here, old Columbus, *we* discovered that western route, you know! Stop thief!" Why was it necessary to wait more than a hundred years longer before the affair of Vinland was mentioned in this connection?

Why did not Norway or Iceland utter a protest in 1493?

Simply because it was not until the seventeenth century that the knowledge of North American geography had reached such a stage of completeness as to suggest to anybody the true significance

of the old voyages from Greenland. That significance could not have been understood by Leif and Thorfinn themselves, or by the compilers of Hauksbók and Flateyar-bók, or by any human being, until about the time of Henry Hudson. Not earlier than that time should we expect to find it mentioned, and it is just then, in 1610, that we do find it mentioned by Arngrim Jonsson, who calls Vinland "an island of *America*, in the region of Greenland, perhaps the modern Estotilandia."<sup>1</sup> This is the earliest glimmering of an association of the idea of Vinland with that of America.

The idea of Vinland was not associated with the idea of America until the seventeenth century.

<sup>1</sup> "Terram veró Landa Rolfoni quæsitam existimarem esse Vinlandiam olim Islandis sic dictam; de qua alibi insulam nempe Americæ e regione Gronlandiæ, quæ fortè hodie Estotilandia," etc. *Crymogæa*, Hamburg, 1610, p. 120.

Abraham Ortelius in 1606 speaks of the Northmen coming to America, but bases his opinion upon the Zeno narrative (published in 1558) and upon the sound of the name *Norumbega*, and apparently knows nothing of Vinland:—"Iosephus Acosta in his booke *De Natura noui orbis* inducens by many reasons to proue, that this part of *America* was originally inhabited by certaine Indians, forced thither by tempestuous weather ouer the South sea which now they call Mare del Zur. But to me it seemes more probable, out of the historie of the two Zeni, gentlemen of Venice, . . . that this New World many ages past was entred upon by some islanders of *Europe*, as namely of *Grænlænd*, Island, and Frisland; being much neerer thereunto than the Indians, nor disioyned thence . . . by an Ocean so huge, and to the Indians so vnnauigable. Also, what else may we coniecture to be signified by this *Norumbega* [the name of a North region of *America*] but that from *Norway*, signifying a North land, some Colonie in times past hath hither beene transplanted?" *Theatre of the Whole World*, London, 1606, p. 5. These passages are quoted and discussed by Reeves, *The Finding of Wineland the Good*, pp. 95, 96. The supposed connection of *Norumbega* with *Norway* is very doubtful. Possibly Stephanus, in his map of 1570 (*Torfæus, Gronlandia antiqua*, 1706), may have had reference to Labrador or the north of Newfoundland.

The genesis of the grand scheme of Columbus has now been set forth, I believe, with sufficient fulness. The cardinal facts are 1, that the need for some such scheme was suggested in 1471, by the discovery that the Guinea coast extended south of the equator; 2, that by 1474 advice had been sought from Toscanelli by the king of Portugal, and not very long after 1474 by Columbus; 3, that upon Toscanelli's letters and map, amended by the Ptolemaic estimate of the earth's size and by the authority of passages quoted in the book of Alliacus (one of which was a verse from the Apocrypha), Columbus based his firm conviction of the feasibility of the western route. How or by whom the suggestion of that route was first made — whether by Columbus himself or by Toscanelli or by Fernando Martinez or, as Antonio Gallo declares, by Bartholomew Columbus,<sup>1</sup> or by some person in Portugal whose name we know not — it would be difficult to decide. Neither can we fix the date when Columbus first sought aid for his scheme from the Portuguese government. There seems to be no good reason why he should not have been talking about it before 1474; but the affair did not come to any kind of a climax until after his return from Guinea, some time after 1482 and certainly not later than 1484. It was on some accounts a favourable time. The war with Castile was out of the way, and Martin Behaim had just invented an improved astrolabe which

*Résumé of the  
genesis of  
Columbus's  
scheme.*

*Martin  
Behaim's  
improved  
astrolabe.*

<sup>1</sup> Gallo, *De navigatione Columbi*, apud Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, tom. xxiii. col. 302.

made it ever so much easier to find and keep one's latitude at sea. It was in 1484 that Portuguese discoveries took a fresh start after a ten years' lull, and Diego Cam, with the learned Behaim and his bran-new astrolabe on board, was about to sail a thousand miles farther south than white men had ever gone before. About this time the scheme of Columbus was formally referred by King John II. to the junto of learned cosmographers from whom the crown had been wont to seek advice. The project was condemned as "visionary,"<sup>1</sup> as indeed it was, — the outcome of vision that saw farther than those men could see. But the king, who had some of his uncle Prince Henry's love for bold enterprises, was more hospitably inclined toward the ideas of Columbus, and he summoned a council of the most learned men in the kingdom to discuss the question.<sup>2</sup> In this council the new scheme found some defenders, while others correctly urged that Columbus must be wrong in supposing Asia to extend so far to the east, and it must be a much longer voyage than he supposed to Cipango and Cathay.<sup>3</sup> Others

Negotiations  
of Columbus  
with John II.  
of Portugal.

<sup>1</sup> Lafuente, *Historia de España*, tom. ix. p. 428.

<sup>2</sup> Vasconcellos, *Vida del rey Don Juan II.*, lib. iv.; La Clède, *Histoire de Portugal*, lib. xiii.

<sup>3</sup> The Portuguese have never been able to forgive Columbus for discovering a new world for Spain, and their chagrin sometimes vents itself in amusing ways. After all, says Cordeiro, Columbus was no such great man as some people think, for he did not discover what he promised to discover; and, moreover, the Portuguese geographers were right in condemning his scheme, because it really is not so far by sea from Lisbon around Africa to Hindustan as from Lisbon by any practicable route westward to Japan! See Luciano Cordeiro, *De la part prise par les Portugais*

argued that the late war had impoverished the country, and that the enterprises on the African coast were all that the treasury could afford. Here the demands of Columbus were of themselves an obstacle to his success. He never at any time held himself cheap,<sup>1</sup> and the rewards and honours for which he insisted on stipulating were greater than the king of Portugal felt inclined to bestow upon a plain Genoese mariner. It was felt that if the enterprise should prove a failure, as very likely it would, the less heartily the government should have committed itself to it beforehand, the less it would expose itself to ridicule. King John was not in general disposed toward unfair and dishonest dealings, but on this occasion, after much parley, he was persuaded to sanction a proceeding

*dans la découverte d'Amérique*, Lisbon, 1876, pp. 23, 24, 29, 30. Well, I don't know that there is any answer to be made to this argument. Logic is logic, says the wise Autocrat:—

“End of the wonderful one-hoss shay,  
Logic is logic, that's all I say.”

Cordeiro's book is elaborately criticised in the learned work of Prospero Peragallo, *Cristoforo Colombo in Portogallo: studi critici*, Genoa, 1882.

<sup>1</sup> “Perciocchè essendo l' Ammiraglio di generosi ed alti pensieri, volle capitolare con suo grande onore e vantaggio, per lasciar la memoria sua, e la grandezza della sua casa, conforme alla grandezza delle sue opere e de' suoi meriti.” *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. xi. The jealous Portuguese historian speaks in a somewhat different tone from the affectionate son:—“Veó requerer á el rey Dom João que le desse alguns navios pera ir á descobrir a ilha de Gypango [*sic*] per esta mar occidental. . . . El rey, porque via ser este Christovão Colom homem falador e glorioso em mostrar suas habilidades, e mas fantastico et de imaginacão com sua ilha de Cypango, que certo no que dezia: davalhe pouco credito.” Barros, *Decada primeira da Asia*, Lisbon, 1752, liv. iii. cap. xi. fol. 56.

quite unworthy of him. Having obtained Columbus's sailing plans, he sent out a ship  
A shabby  
trick. secretly, to carry some goods to the Cape Verde islands, and then to try the experiment of the westward voyage. If there should turn out to be anything profitable in the scheme, this would be safer and more frugal than to meet the exorbitant demands of this ambitious foreigner. So it was done; but the pilots, having no grand idea to urge them forward, lost heart before the stupendous expanse of waters that confronted them, and beat an ignominious retreat to Lisbon; whereupon Columbus, having been informed  
Columbus  
leaves Portugal, of the trick,<sup>1</sup> departed in high dudgeon, to lay his proposals before the crown of Castile. He seems to have gone rather suddenly,

<sup>1</sup> It has been urged in the king's defence that "such a proceeding was not an instance of bad faith or perfidy (!) but rather of the policy customary at that time, which consisted in distrusting everything that was foreign, and in promoting by whatever means the national glory." Yes, indeed, whether the means were fair or foul. Of course it was a common enough policy, but it was lying and cheating all the same. "Não foi sem duvida por mà fè ou perfidia que tacitamente se mandon armar hum navio à cujo capitão se confiou o plano que Colombo havia proposto, e cuja execucao se lhe encarregou; mas sim por seguir a politica naquelle tempo usada, que toda consistia em olhar com desconfiança para tudo o que era estrangeiro, e en promover por todos os modos a gloria nacional. O capitão nomeado para a empreza, como não tivesse nem o espirito, nem a convicção de Colombo, depois de huma curta viagem nos mares do Oeste, fez-se na volta da terra; e arribou à Lisboa descontente e desanimado." Campe, *Historia do descobrimento da America*, Paris, 1836, tom. i. p. 13. The frightened sailors protested that YOU MIGHT AS WELL EXPECT TO FIND LAND IN THE SKY AS IN THAT WASTE OF WATERS! See Las Casas, *Hist. de las Indias*, tom. i. p. 221. Las Casas calls the king's conduct by its right name, *dobladura*, "trickery."

leaving his wife, who died shortly after, and one or two children who must also have died, for he tells us that he never saw them again. But his son Diego, aged perhaps four or five years, he took with him as far as the town of Huelva, near the little port of Palos in Andalusia, where he left him with one of his wife's sisters, who had married a man of that town named Muliar.<sup>1</sup> This arrival in Spain was probably late in the autumn of 1484, and Columbus seems to have entered into the service of Ferdinand and Isabella January 20, 1486. What he was doing in the interval of rather more than a year is not known. There is a very doubtful tradition

and enters the service of the Spanish sovereigns, 1486.

<sup>1</sup> It has generally been supposed, on the authority of *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. xi., that his wife had lately died; but an autograph letter of Columbus, in the possession of his lineal descendant and representative the present Duke of Veraguas, proves that this is a mistake. In this letter Columbus says expressly that when he left Portugal he left wife and children, and never saw them again. (Navarrete, *Coleccion*, tom. ii. doc. cxxxvii. p. 255.) As Las Casas, who knew Diego so well, also supposed his mother to have died before his father left Portugal, it is most likely that she died soon afterwards. Ferdinand Columbus says that Diego was left in charge of some friars at the convent of La Rábida near Palos (*loc. cit.*); Las Casas is not quite so sure; he thinks Diego was left with some friend of his father at Palos, or perhaps (*por ventura*) at La Rábida. (*Historia*, tom. i. p. 227.) These mistakes were easy to make, for both La Rábida and Huelva were close by Palos, and we know that Diego's aunt Muliar was living at Huelva. (Las Casas, *op. cit.* tom. i. p. 241; Harris, tom. i. pp. 279, 356, 391; tom. ii. p. 229.) It is pretty clear that Columbus never visited La Rábida before the autumn of 1491 (see below, p. 412). My own notion is that Columbus may have left his wife with an infant and perhaps one older child, relieving her of the care of Diego by taking him to his aunt, and intending as soon as practicable to reunite the family. He clearly did not know at the outset whether he should stay in Spain or not.

that he tried to interest the republic of Genoa in his enterprise,<sup>1</sup> and a still more doubtful rumour that he afterwards made proposals to the Venetian senate.<sup>2</sup> If these things ever happened, there was time enough for them in this year, and they can hardly be assigned to any later period. In 1486 we find Columbus at Cordova, where the sovereigns were holding court. He was unable to effect anything until he had gained the ear of Isabella's finance minister Alonso de Quintanilla, who had a mind hospitable to large ideas. The two sovereigns had scarcely time to attend to such things, for there was a third king in Spain, the Moor at Granada, whom there now seemed a fair prospect of driving to Africa, and thus ending the struggle that had lasted with few intermissions for nearly eight centuries. The final war with Granada had been going on since the end of 1481, and considering how it weighed upon the minds of Ferdinand and Isabella it is rather remarkable that cosmography got any hearing at all. The affair was referred to the queen's confessor Fernando de Talavera, whose first impression was that if what Columbus said was true, it was very strange that other geographers should have failed to know all about it long ago. Ideas of evolution had not yet begun to exist in those days, and it was thought that what the ancients did not know was not worth

<sup>1</sup> It rests upon an improbable statement of Ramusio, who places the event as early as 1470. The first Genoese writer to allude to it is Casoni, *Annali della Repubblica di Genova*, Genoa, 1708, pp. 26-31. Such testimony is of small value.

<sup>2</sup> First mentioned in 1800 by Marin, *Storia del commercio de' Veneziani*, Venice, 1798-1808, tom. vii. p. 236.

knowing. Toward the end of 1486 the Spanish sovereigns were at Salamanca, and Talavera referred the question to a junto of learned men, including professors of the famous university.<sup>1</sup> There was no lack of taunt and ridicule, and a whole arsenal of texts from Scripture and the Fathers were discharged at Columbus, but it is noticeable that quite a number were inclined to think that his scheme might be worth trying, and that some of his most firmly convinced supporters were priests. No decision had been reached when the sovereigns started on the Malaga campaign in the spring of 1487.

After the surrender of Malaga in August, 1487, Columbus visited the court in that city. For a year or more after that time silken chains seem to have bound him to Cordova. He had formed a connection with a lady of noble family, Beatriz Enriquez de Arana, who gave birth to his son Ferdinand on the 15th of August, 1488.<sup>2</sup> Shortly after this event, Columbus made a visit to Lisbon, in all probability for

The junto at  
Salamanca.

Birth of  
Ferdinand  
Columbus,  
Aug. 15, 1488.

<sup>1</sup> The description usually given of this conference rests upon the authority of Remesal, *Historia de la provincia de Chyapa*, Madrid, 1619, lib. ii. cap. vii. p. 52. Las Casas merely says that the question was referred to certain persons at the court, *Hist. de las Indias*, tom. i. p. 228. It is probably not true that the project of Columbus was officially condemned by the university of Salamanca as a corporate body. See Camara, *Religion y Ciencia*, Valladolid, 1880, p. 261.

<sup>2</sup> Some historians, unwilling to admit any blemishes in the character of Columbus, have supposed that this union was sanctioned by marriage, but this is not probable. He seems to have been tenderly attached to Beatriz, who survived him many years. See Harrisse, tom. ii. pp. 353-357.

the purpose of meeting his brother Bartholomew, who had returned in the last week of December, 1487, in the Dias expedition, with the proud news of the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope,<sup>1</sup> which was

Bartholomew  
Columbus  
returns from  
the Cape of  
Good Hope,  
Dec., 1487.

<sup>1</sup> The authority for Bartholomew Columbus having sailed to the Cape of Good Hope with Dias is a manuscript note of his own in Christopher's copy of the *Imago Mundi*: "Nota quod hoc anno de 88 [it should be 87] in mense decembri appulit in Ulixbona Bartholomeus Didacus capitaneus trium carabelarum quem miserat serenissimus rex Portugalie in Guineam ad tentandum terram. Et renunciavit ipse serenissimo regi prout navigaverat ultra jam navigata leuchas 600, videlicet 450 ad austrum et 150 ad aquilonem usque montem per ipsum nominatum *Cabo de boa esperanza* quem in Agesimba estimamus. Qui quidem in eo loco invenit se distare per astrolabium ultra lineam equinoctialem gradus 35. Quem viagium pictavit et scripsit de leucha in leucham in una carta navigationis ut oculi visum ostenderet ipso serenissimo regi. In quibus omnibus interfui." M. Varnhagen has examined this note and thinks it is in the handwriting of Christopher Columbus (*Bulletin de Géographie*, janvier, 1858, tom. xv. p. 71); and M. d'Avezac (*Canevas chronologique*, p. 58), accepting this opinion, thinks that the words in *quibus omnibus interfui*, "in all of which I took part," only mean that Christopher was present in Lisbon when the expedition returned, and heard the whole story! With all possible respect for such great scholars as MM. d'Avezac and Varnhagen, I submit that the opinion of Las Casas, who first called attention to this note, must be much better than theirs on such a point as the handwriting of the two brothers. When Las Casas found the note he wondered whether it was meant for Bartholomew or Christopher, i. e. wondered which of the two was meant to be described as having "taken part;" but at all events, says Las Casas, the handwriting is Bartholomew's:—"Estas son palabras escritas de la mano de Bartolomé Colon, no sé si las escribió de sí ó de su letra por su hermano Cristóbal Colon." Under these circumstances it seems idle to suppose that Las Casas could have been mistaken about the handwriting; he evidently put his mind on that point, and in the next breath he goes on to say, "la letra yo conozco ser de Bartolomé Colon, porque tuve muchas suyas," i. e. "I know it is Bartholomew's writing, for I have had many letters of his;" and again "estas

rightly believed to be the extremity of Africa; and we can well understand how Christopher, on seeing the success of Prince Henry's method of reaching the Indies so nearly vindicated, must have become more impatient than ever to prove the superiority of his own method. It was probably not long

palabras . . . de la misma letra y mano de Bartolomé Colon, la cual muy bien conocí y agora tengo hartas cartas y letras suyas, tratando deste viaje," i. e. "these words . . . from the very writing and hand of Bartholomew Columbus, which I knew very well, and I have to-day many charts and letters of his, treating of this voyage." (*Hist. de las Indias*, tom. i. pp. 213, 214.) This last sentence makes Las Casas an independent witness to Bartholomew's presence in the expedition, a matter about which he was not likely to be mistaken. What puzzled him was the question, not whether Bartholomew went, but whether Christopher could have gone also, "pudo ser tambien que se hallase Cristóbal Colon." Now Christopher certainly did not go on that voyage. The expedition started in August, 1486, and returned to Lisbon in December, 1487, after an absence of sixteen months and seventeen days, "auendo dezaseis meses et dezasete dias que erão partidos delle." (Barros, *Decada primeira da Asia*, Lisbon, 1752, tom. i. fol. 42, 44.) The account-book of the treasury of Castile shows that sums of money were paid to Christopher at Seville, May 5, July 3, August 27, and October 15, 1487; so that he could not have gone with Dias (see HARRISSE, tom. ii. p. 191). Neither could Christopher have been in Lisbon in December, 1487, when the little fleet returned, for his safe-conduct from King John is dated March 20, 1488. It was not until the autumn of 1488 that Columbus made this visit to Portugal, and M. d'Avezac has got the return of the fleet a year too late. Bartholomew's note followed a custom which made 1488 begin at Christmas, 1487.

In reading a later chapter of Las Casas for another purpose (tom. i. p. 227), I come again upon this point. He rightly concludes that Christopher could not have gone with Dias, and again declares most positively that the handwriting of the note was Bartholomew's and not Christopher's.

This footnote affords a good illustration of the kind of difficulties that surround such a subject as the life of Columbus, and the ease with which an excess of ingenuity may discover mare's nests.

after Bartholomew's return that Christopher determined to go and see him, for he applied to King John II. for a kind of safe-conduct, which was duly granted March 20, 1488. This document<sup>1</sup> guarantees Christopher against arrest or arraignment or detention on any charge civil or criminal whatever, during his stay in Portugal, and commands all magistrates in that kingdom to respect it. From this it would seem probable that in the eagerness of his geographical speculations he had neglected his business affairs and left debts behind him in Portugal for which he was liable to be

arrested. The king's readiness to grant the desired privilege seems to indicate that he may have cherished a hope of regaining the services of this accomplished chart-maker and mariner. Christopher did not avail himself of the privilege until late in the summer,<sup>2</sup> and it is only fair to suppose that he waited for the birth of his child and some assurance of its mother's safety. On meeting Bartholomew he evidently set him to work forthwith in

making overtures to the courts of England and France. It was natural enough that Bartholomew should first set out for Bristol, where old shipmates and acquaintances were sure to be found. It appears that on the way he was captured by pirates, and thus some delay was occasioned before he arrived in London

Christopher visits Bartholomew at Lisbon, cir. Sept., 1488; and sends him to England.

land and France. It was natural enough that Bartholomew should first set out for Bristol, where old shipmates and acquaintances were sure to be found. It appears that on the way he was captured by pirates, and thus some delay was occasioned before he arrived in London

<sup>1</sup> It may be found in Navarrete, *Coleccion de viages*, tom. ii. pp. 5, 6.

<sup>2</sup> The account-book of the treasury shows that on June 16 he was still in Spain. See HARRISSE, tom. i. p. 355.

and showed the king a map, probably similar to Toscanelli's and embellished with quaint Latin verses. An entry on this map informs us that it was made by Bartholomew Columbus in London, February 10, 1488, which I think should be read 1489 or even 1490, so we may suppose it to have been about that time or perhaps later that he approached the throne.<sup>1</sup> Henry VII. was intelligent enough

Bartholomew,  
after mishaps,  
reaches Eng-  
land cir. Feb.,  
1490;

<sup>1</sup> The entry, as given by Las Casas, is "Pro autore, seu pictore, || Gennua cui patria est, nomen cui Bartolomeus || Columbus de terra rubea, opus edidit istud || Londonijs: anno domini millesimo quatercentesimo octiesque uno || Atque insuper anno octavo: decimaque die mensis Februarii. || Laudes Christo cantentur abunde." *Historia*, tom. i. p. 225. Now since Bartholomew Columbus was a fairly educated man, writing this note in England on a map made for the eyes of the king of England, I suppose he used the old English style which made the year begin at the vernal equinox instead of Christmas, so that his February, 1488, means the next month but one after December, 1488, i. e. what in our new style becomes February, 1489. Bartholomew returned to Lisbon from Africa in the last week of December, 1487, and it is not likely that his plans could have been matured and himself settled down in London in less than seven weeks. The logical relation of the events, too, shows plainly that Christopher's visit to Lisbon was for the purpose of consulting his brother and getting first-hand information about the greatest voyage the world had ever seen. In the early weeks of 1488 Christopher sends his request for a safe-conduct, gets it March 20, waits till his child is born, August 15, and then presently goes. Bartholomew may have sailed by the first of October for England, where (according to this reading of his date) we actually find him four months later. What happened to him in this interval? Here we come to the story of the pirates. M. Harrisse, who never loses an opportunity for throwing discredit upon the *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, has failed to make the correction of date which I have here suggested. He puts Bartholomew in London in February, 1488, and is thus unable to assign any reason for Christopher's visit to Lisbon. He also finds that in the forty-six days between Christmas, 1487, and February, 10, 1488, there is hardly room enough for any delay

to see the bearings of Bartholomew's arguments, and at the same time, as a good man of business,

due to so grave a cause as capture by pirates. (*Christophe Colomb*, vol. ii. p. 192.) He therefore concludes that the statement in the *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. xi., is unworthy of credit, and it is upon an accumulation of small difficulties like this that he bases his opinion that Ferdinand Columbus cannot have written that book. But Las Casas also gives the story of the pirates, and adds the information that they were "Easterlings," though he cannot say of what nation, i. e. whether Dutch, German, or perhaps Danes. He says that Bartholomew was stripped of his money and fell sick, and after his recovery was obliged to earn money by map-making before he could get to England. (*Historia*, tom. i. p. 225.) Could all this have happened within the four months which I have allowed between October, 1488, and February, 1489? Voyages before the invention of steamboats were of very uncertain duration. John Adams in 1784 was fifty-four days in getting from London to Amsterdam (see my *Critical Period of American History*, p. 156). But with favourable weather a Portuguese caravel in 1488 ought to have run from Lisbon to Bristol in fourteen days or less, so that in four months there would be time enough for quite a chapter of accidents. Las Casas, however, says it was a long time before Bartholomew was able to reach England: — "Esto fué causa que enfermase y viniese á mucha pobreza, y estuviese mucho tempo sin poder llegar á Inglaterra, hasta tanto que quiso Dios sanarle; y reformado algo, por su industria y trabajos de sus manos, haciendo cartas de marear, llegó á Inglaterra, y, pasados un día y otros, hobo de alcanzar que le oyese Enrique VII." It is impossible, I think, to read this passage without feeling that at least a year must have been consumed; and I do not think we are entitled to disregard the words of Las Casas in such a matter. But how shall we get the time?

Is it possible that Las Casas made a slight mistake in deciphering the date on Bartholomew's map? Either that mariner did not give the map to Henry VII., or the king gave it back, or more likely it was made in duplicate. At any rate Las Casas had it, along with his many other Columbus documents, and for aught we know it may still be tumbling about somewhere in the Spanish archives. It was so badly written (*de muy mala é corrupta letra*), apparently in abbreviations (*sin ortografía*), that Las Casas says he found extreme difficulty in making it out. Now let us observe that date, which is given in fantastic style, apparently because the

he was likely to be cautious about investing money in remote or doubtful enterprises. What arguments were used we do not know, but the spring of 1492 had arrived before any decisive answer had been given. Meanwhile <sup>and goes thence to France before 1492.</sup> Bartholomew had made his way to France, and found a powerful protector in a certain Madame de Bourbon,<sup>1</sup> while he made maps for

inscription is in a rude doggerel, and the writer seems to have wished to keep his "verses" tolerably even. (They don't scan much better than Walt Whitman's.) As it stands, the date reads *anno domini millesimo quatercentesimo octiesque uno atque insuper anno octavo*, i. e. "in the year of our Lord the thousandth, four hundredth, AND EIGHT-TIMES-ONE, and thereafter the eighth year." What business has this cardinal number *octiesque uno* in a row of ordinals? If it were translatable, which it is not, it would give us  $1,000 + 400 + 8 + 8 = 1416$ , an absurd date. The most obvious way to make the passage readable is to insert the ordinal *octogesimo primo* instead of the incongruous *octiesque uno*; then it will read "in the year of our Lord the one-thousand-four-hundred-and-eighty-first, and thereafter the eighth year," that is to say 1489. Now translate old style into new style, and February, 1489, becomes February, 1490, which I believe to be the correct date. This allows sixteen months for Bartholomew's mishaps; it justifies the statement in which Las Casas confirms Ferdinand Columbus; and it harmonizes with the statement of Lord Bacon: "For Christopherus Columbus, refused by the king of Portugal (who would not embrace at once both east and west), employed his brother Bartholomew Columbus unto King Henry to negotiate for his discovery. And it so fortuned that he was taken by pirates at sea; by which accidental impediment he was long ere he came to the king; so long that before he had obtained a capitulation with the king for his brother the enterprise was achieved, and so the West Indies by Providence were then reserved for the crown of Castilia." *Historie of the Raygne of K. Henry the Seventh*, Bacon's Works, Boston, 1860, vol. xi. p. 296. Lord Bacon may have taken the statement from Ferdinand's biography; but it probably agreed with English traditions, and ought not to be slighted in this connection.

<sup>1</sup> One of the sisters of Charles VIII. See HARRISSE, tom. ii. p. 194.

people at the court and waited to see if there were any chances of getting help from Charles VIII.

As for Christopher Columbus, we find him back in Spain again, in May, 1489, attending court at Cordova. In the following autumn there was much suffering in Spain from floods and famine,<sup>1</sup> and the sovereigns were too busy with the Moorish war to give ear to Columbus. It was no time for new undertakings, and the weary suitor began to think seriously of going in person to the French court. First, however, he thought it worth while to make an attempt to get private capital enlisted in his enterprise, and in the Spain of that day such private capital meant a largess from some wealthy grandee. Accordingly about Christmas of 1489, after the Beza campaign in which Columbus is said to have fought with distinguished valour,<sup>2</sup> he seems to have applied to the most powerful nobleman in Spain, the Duke of Medina-Sidonia, but without success. But at the hands of Luis de la Cerda,

The Duke of Medina-Celi proposes to furnish the ships for Columbus,

Duke of Medina-Celi, he met with more encouragement than he had as yet found in any quarter. That nobleman entertained Columbus most hospitably at his castle at Puerto de Santa Maria for nearly two years, until the autumn of 1491. He became convinced that the scheme of Columbus was feasible, and decided to fit up two or three caravels at his own expense, if necessary, but first he thought it proper to ask the queen's consent, and to offer her another chance to take part in the

<sup>1</sup> Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, cap. xci.

<sup>2</sup> Zuñiga, *Anales de Sevilla*, lib. xii. p. 404.

enterprise.<sup>1</sup> Isabella was probably unwilling to have the duke come in for a large share of the profits in case the venture should prove successful. She refused the royal license, saying that she had not quite made up her mind whether to take up the affair or not, but if she should decide to do so she would be glad to have the duke take part in it.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile she referred the question to Alonso de Quintanilla, comptroller of the treasury of Castile. This was in the spring of 1491, when the whole country was in a buzz of excitement with the preparations for the siege of Granada. The baffled Columbus visited the sovereigns in camp, but could not get them to attend to him, and early in the autumn, thoroughly disgusted and sick at heart, he made up his mind to shake the dust of Castile from his feet and see what could be done in France. In October or November he went to Huelva, apparently to get his son Diego, who had been left there, in charge of his aunt. It was probably his intention to take all the family he had — Beatriz

but Isabella  
withholds her  
consent.

Columbus  
makes up his  
mind to get  
his family to-  
gether and go  
to France,  
Oct., 1491.

<sup>1</sup> See the letter of March 19, 1493, from the Duke of Medina-Celi to the Grand Cardinal of Spain (from the archives of Simancas) in Navarrete *Coleccion de viages*, tom. ii. p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> This promise was never fulfilled. When Columbus returned in triumph, arriving March 6, 1493, at Lisbon, and March 15 at Palos, the Duke of Medina-Celi wrote the letter just cited, recalling the queen's promise and asking to be allowed to send to the Indies once each year an expedition on his own account; for, he says, if he had not kept Columbus with him in 1490 and 1491 he would have gone to France, and Castile would have lost the prize. There was some force in this, but Isabella does not appear to have heeded the request.

and her infant son Ferdinand, of whom he was extremely fond, as well as Diego — and find a new home in either France or England, besides ascertaining what had become of his brother Bartholomew, from whom he had not heard a word since the latter left Portugal for England.<sup>1</sup>

But now at length events took a favourable turn. Fate had grown tired of fighting against such indomitable perseverance. For some years now the stately figure of Columbus had been a familiar sight in the streets of Seville and Cordova, and as he passed along, with his white hair streaming in the breeze, and countenance aglow with intensity of purpose or haggard with disappointment at some fresh rebuff, the ragged urchins of the pavement tapped their foreheads and smiled with mingled wonder and amusement at this madman. Seventeen years had elapsed since the letter from Toscanelli to Martinez, and all that was mortal of the Florentine astronomer had long since been laid in the grave. For Columbus himself old age was not far away, yet he seemed no nearer the fulfilment of his grand purpose than when he had first set it forth to the king of Portugal. We can well imagine that when he started from Huelva, with his little son Diego, now some eleven or twelve years old, again to begin renewing his suit in a strange country, his thoughts must have been sombre enough. For some reason or other — tradition says to ask for some bread and water for his boy — he stopped at the Franciscan monastery

<sup>1</sup> This theory of the situation is fully sustained by Las Casas, tom. i. p. 241.

of La Rábida, about half a league from Palos. The prior, Juan Perez, who had never seen Columbus before, became greatly interested in him and listened with earnest attention to his story. This worthy monk, who before 1478 had been Isabella's father-confessor, had a mind hospitable to new ideas. He sent for Garcia Fernandez, a physician of Palos, who was somewhat versed in cosmography, and for Martin Alonso Pinzon, a well-to-do ship-owner and trained mariner of that town, and in the quiet of the monastery a conference was held in which Columbus carried conviction to the minds of these new friends. Pinzon declared himself ready to embark in the enterprise in person. The venerable prior forthwith sent a letter to the queen, and received a very prompt reply summoning him to attend her in the camp before Granada. The result of the interview was that within a few days Perez returned to the convent with a purse of 20,000 maravedis (equivalent to about 1,180 dollars of the present day), out of which Columbus bought a new suit of clothes and a mule; and about the first of December he set out for the camp in company with Juan Perez, leaving the boy Diego in charge of the priest Martin Sanchez and a certain Rodriguez Cabejudo, upon whose sworn testimony, together with that of the physician Garcia Fernandez, some years afterward, several of these facts are related.<sup>1</sup>

He stops at La Rábida, and meets the prior Juan Perez.

Perez writes to the queen,

and Columbus is summoned back to court.

<sup>1</sup> My account of these proceedings at La Rábida differs in some particulars from any heretofore given, and I think gets the events

At once upon the arrival of Columbus in the camp before Granada, his case was argued then

into an order of sequence that is at once more logical and more in harmony with the sources of information than any other. The error of Ferdinand Columbus—a very easy one to commit, and not in the least damaging to his general character as biographer—lay in confusing his father's two real visits (in 1484 and 1491) to Huelva with two visits (one imaginary in 1484 and one real in 1491) to La Rábida, which was close by, between Huelva and Palos. The visits were all the more likely to get mixed up in recollection because in each case their object was little Diego and in each case he was left in charge of somebody in that neighbourhood. The confusion has been helped by another for which Ferdinand is not responsible, viz.: the friar Juan Perez has been confounded with another friar Antonio de Marchena, who Columbus says was the only person who from the time of his first arrival in Spain had always befriended him and never mocked at him. These worthy friars twain have been made into one (e. g. "the prior of the convent, Juan Perez de Marchena," Irving's *Columbus*, vol. i. p. 128), and it has often been supposed that Marchena's acquaintance began with Columbus at La Rábida in 1484, and that Diego was left at the convent at that time. But some modern sources of information have served at first to bemuddle, and then when more carefully sifted, to clear up the story. In 1508 Diego Columbus brought suit against the Spanish crown to vindicate his claim to certain territories discovered by his father, and there was a long investigation in which many witnesses were summoned and past events were busily raked over the coals. Among these witnesses were Rodriguez Cabejudo and the physician Garcia Fernandez, who gave from personal recollection a very lucid account of the affairs at La Rábida. These proceedings are printed in Navarrete, *Coleccion de viages*, tom. iii. pp. 238-591. More recently the publication of the great book of Las Casas has furnished some very significant clues, and the elaborate researches of M. Harrisse have furnished others. (See Las Casas, lib. i. cap. xxix., xxxi.; Harrisse, tom. i. pp. 341-372; tom. ii. pp. 237-231; cf. Peragallo, *L' autenticità*, etc., pp. 117-134.)—It now seems clear that Marchena, whom Columbus knew from his first arrival in Spain, was not associated with La Rábida. At that time Columbus left Diego, a mere infant, with his wife's sister at Huelva. Seven years later, intending to leave Spain forever, he went to Huelva and took Diego, then a small boy. On his way from

and there before an assembly of learned men and was received more hospitably than formerly, at Salamanca. Several eminent prelates had come to think favourably of his project or to deem it at least worth a trial. Among these were the royal confessors, Deza and Talavera, the latter having changed his mind, and especially Mendoza, archbishop of Toledo, who now threw his vast influence decisively in favour of Columbus.<sup>1</sup> The treasurers of the two kingdoms, moreover, Quintanilla for Castile and Luis de Santangel for Aragon, were among his most enthusiastic supporters; and the result of the conference was the queen's promise to take up the matter in earnest as soon as the Moor should have surrendered Granada.

The junta before Granada, Dec., 1491.

Huelva to the Seville road, and thence to Cordova (where he would have been joined by Beatriz and Ferdinand), he happened to pass by La Rábida, where up to that time he was evidently unknown, and to attract the attention of the prior Juan Perez, and the wheel of fortune suddenly and unexpectedly turned. As Columbus's next start was not for France, but for Granada, his boy was left in charge of two trustworthy persons. On May 8, 1492, the little Diego was appointed page to Don John, heir-apparent to the thrones of Castile and Aragon, with a stipend of 9,400 maravedis. On February 19, 1498, after the death of that young prince, Diego became page to Queen Isabella.

<sup>1</sup> In popular allusions to Columbus it is quite common to assume or imply that he encountered nothing but opposition from the clergy. For example the account in Draper's *Conflict between Science and Religion*, p. 161, can hardly be otherwise understood by the reader. But observe that Marchena who never mocked at Columbus, Juan Perez who gave the favourable turn to his affairs, the great prelates Deza and Mendoza, and the two treasurers Santangel and Quintanilla, were every one of them priests! Without cordial support from the clergy no such enterprise as that of Columbus could have been undertaken, in Spain at least. It is quite right that we should be free-thinkers; and it is also desirable that we should have some respect for facts.

Columbus had not long to wait for that great event, which came on the 2d of January, 1492, and was hailed with rejoicings throughout Europe as in some sort a compensation for the loss of Constantinople. It must have been with a manifold sense of triumph that Columbus saw the banner of Spain unfurled to the breeze from the highest tower of the Alhambra. But at this critical moment in his fortunes the same obstacle was encountered that long before had broken off his negotiations with the king of Portugal. With pride and self-confidence not an inch abated by all these years of trial, he demanded such honours and substantial rewards as seemed extravagant to the queen, and Talavera advised her not to grant them. Columbus insisted upon being appointed admiral of the ocean and viceroy of such heathen countries as he might discover, besides having for his own use and behoof one eighth part of such revenues and profits as might accrue from the expedition. In principle this sort of remuneration did not differ from that which the crown of Portugal had been wont to award to its eminent discoverers;<sup>1</sup> but in amount it was liable to prove

Surrender of  
Granada, Jan.  
2, 1492.

Columbus ne-  
gotiates with  
the queen.

<sup>1</sup> Our Scandinavian friends are fond of pointing to this demand of Columbus as an indication that he secretly expected to "discover America," and not merely to find the way to Asia. But how about Ferdinand and Isabella, who finally granted what was demanded, and their ministers who drew up the agreement, to say nothing of the clerks who engrossed it? What did they all understand by "discovering islands and continents in the ocean"? Were they all in this precious Vinland secret? If so, it was pretty well kept. But in truth there was nothing singular in these stipulations. Portugal paid for discovery in just this way

indefinitely great, enough perhaps to raise to princely power and rank this foreign adventurer. Could he not be satisfied with something less? But Columbus was as inexorable as the Sibyl with her books, and would hear of no abatement in his price. For this "great constancy and loftiness of soul,"<sup>1</sup> Las Casas warmly commends his friend Columbus. A querulous critic might call it unreasonable obstinacy. But in truth the good man seems to have entertained another grand scheme of his own, to which he wished to make his maritime venture contribute. It was natural that his feelings toward Turks should have been no more amiable than those of Hannibal toward the Romans. It was the Turks who had ruined the commerce of his native Genoa, in his youth he had more than once crossed swords with their corsairs, and now he looked forward to the time when he might play the part of a second Godfrey de Bouillon and deliver Jerusalem from the miscreant followers of Mahound.<sup>2</sup> Vast resources would be needed for

by granting governorships over islands like the Azores, or long stretches of continent like Guinea, along with a share of the revenues yielded by such places. See for example the cases of Gonzalo Cabral, Fernando Gomez, and others in Major, *Prince Henry the Navigator*, pp. 238, 321, and elsewhere. In their search for the Indies the Portuguese were continually finding new lands, and it was likely to be the same with the western route, which was supposed (see Catalan, Toscanelli, and Behaim maps) to lead among spice islands innumerable, and to Asiatic kingdoms whose heathen people had no rights of sovereignty that Christian monarchs felt bound to respect.

<sup>1</sup> Las Casas, *op. cit.* tom i. p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> See his letter of February, 1502, to Pope Alexander VI. in Navarrete, tom. ii. p. 280; and cf. Helps, *Spanish Conquest in America*, vol. i. p. 96; Roselly de Lorgues, *Christophe Colomb*, p. 394.

such work, and from Cipango with its gold-roofed temples, and the nameless and numberless isles of spices that crowded the Cathayan seas, he hoped to obtain them. Long brooding over his cherished projects, in which chimeras were thus mixed with anticipations of scientific truth, had imparted to his character a tinge of religious fanaticism. He had come to regard himself as a man with a mis-

His terms are  
considered  
exorbitant.

sion to fulfil, as God's chosen instrument for enlarging the bounds of Christendom and achieving triumphs of untold magnificence for its banners. In this mood he was apt to address kings with an air of equality that ill comported with his humble origin and slender means; and on the present occasion, if Talavera felt his old doubts and suspicions reviving, and was more than half inclined to set Columbus down as a mere vendor of crotchets, one can hardly wonder.

The negotiations were broken off, and the indomitable enthusiast once more prepared to go to France. He had actually started on his mule one fine winter day, when Luis de Santangel rushed

Interposition  
of Luis de  
Santangel.

into the queen's room and spoke to her with all the passionate and somewhat reproachful energy of one who felt that a golden opportunity was slipping away forever. His arguments were warmly seconded by Quintanilla, who had followed him into the room, as well as by the queen's bosom friend Beatriz de Bobadilla, Marchioness of Moya, who happened to be sitting on the sofa and was a devoted admirer of Columbus. An impulse seized Isabella. A courier was sent on a fleet horse, and overtook Colum-

bus as he was jogging quietly over the bridge of Pinos, about six miles out from Granada. The matter was reconsidered and an arrangement was soon made. It was agreed:—

“1. That Columbus should have, for himself, during his life, and for his heirs and successors forever, the office of admiral in all the islands and continents which he might discover or acquire in the ocean, with similar honours and prerogatives to those enjoyed by the high admiral of Castile in his district.

Agreement between Columbus and the sovereigns.

“2. That he should be viceroy and governor-general over all the said lands and continents; with the privilege of nominating three candidates for the government of each island or province, one of whom should be selected by the sovereigns.

“3. That he should be entitled to reserve for himself one tenth of all pearls, precious stones, gold, silver, spices, and all other articles and merchandises, in whatever manner found, bought, bartered, or gained within his admiralty, the costs being first deducted.

“4. That he, or his lieutenant, should be the sole judge in all causes and disputes arising out of traffic between those countries and Spain, provided the high admiral of Castile had similar jurisdiction in his district.

“5. That he might then, and at all after times, contribute an eighth part of the expense in fitting out vessels to sail on this enterprise, and receive an eighth part of the profits.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I cite this version from Irving's *Columbus*, vol. i. p. 142, making a slight amendment in the rendering; the original text is in

Columbus was not long in finding friends to advance or promise on his account an eighth part of the sum immediately required. A considerable amount was assessed upon the town of Palos in punishment for certain misdeeds or delinquencies on the part of its people or some of them. Castile assumed the rest of the burden, though Santangel may have advanced a million maravedis out of the treasury of Aragon, or out of the funds of the *Hermandad*,<sup>1</sup> or perhaps more likely on his own account.<sup>2</sup> In any case it was a loan to the treasury of Castile simply. It was always distinctly under-

Navarrete, tom. ii. p. 7. A few days later the title of "Don" was granted to Columbus and made hereditary in his family along with the offices of viceroy and governor-general.

<sup>1</sup> A police organization formed in 1476 for suppressing highway robbery.

<sup>2</sup> It is not easy to give an accurate account of the cost of this most epoch-making voyage in all history. Conflicting statements by different authorities combine with the fluctuating values of different kinds of money to puzzle and mislead us. According to M. HARRISSE 1,000,000 maravedis would be equivalent to 295,175 francs, or about 59,000 gold dollars of United States money at present values. Las Casas (tom. i. p. 256) says that the eighth part, raised by Columbus, was 500,000 maravedis (29,500 dollars). Account-books preserved in the archives of Simancas show that the sums paid from the treasury of Castile amounted to 1,140,000 maravedis (67,500 dollars). Assuming the statement of Las Casas to be correct, the amounts contributed would perhaps have been as follows:—

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Queen Isabella, from Castile treasury . . .                                      | \$67,500  |
| “ loan from Santangel . . .  | 59,000    |
| Columbus . . . . .   | 29,500    |
| Other sources, including contribution levied<br>upon the town of Palos . . . . . | 80,000    |
| Total . . . . .  | \$236,000 |

This total seems to me altogether too large for probability, and so does the last item, which is simply put at the figure necessary

stood that Ferdinand as king of Aragon had no share in the enterprise, and that the Spanish Indies were an appurtenance to the crown of Castile. The agreement was signed April 17, 1492, and with tears of joy Columbus vowed to devote every maravedi that should come to him to the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre.

When he reached Palos in May, with royal orders for ships and men, there had like to have been a riot. Terrible dismay was felt at the prospect of launching out for such a voy-

Dismay at  
Palos.

to make the total eight times 29,500. I am inclined to suspect that Las Casas (with whom arithmetic was not always a strong point) may have got his figures wrong. The amount of Santangel's loan also depends upon the statement of Las Casas, and we do not know whether he took it from a document or from hearsay. Nor do we know whether it should be added to, or included in, the first item. More likely, I think, the latter. The only item that we know with documentary certainty is the first, so that our statement becomes modified as follows:—

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Queen Isabella, from Castile treasury . . . | \$67,500   |
| “ loan from Santangel . . . . .             | ?  |
| Columbus . . . . .                          | ?  |
| Town of Palos . . . . .                     | { rent of two fully<br>equipped caravels<br>for two months, etc. |
| Total . . . . .                             | ?  |

(Cf. HARRISSE, tom. i. pp. 391-404.) Unsatisfactory, but certain as far as it goes. Alas, how often historical statements are thus reduced to meagreness, after the hypothetical or ill-supported part has been sifted out! The story that the Pinzon brothers advanced to Columbus his portion is told by Las Casas, but he very shrewdly doubts it. The famous story that Isabella pledged her crown jewels (*Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. xiv.) has also been doubted, but perhaps on insufficient grounds, by M. HARRISSE. It is confirmed by Las Casas (tom. i. p. 249). According to one account she pledged them to Santangel in security for his loan,—which seems not altogether improbable. See PIZARRO Y ORELLANA, *Varones ilustres del Nuevo Mundo*, Madrid, 1639, p. 10.

age upon the Sea of Darkness. Groans and curses greeted the announcement of the forced contribution. But Martin Pinzon and his brothers were active in supporting the crown officials, and the work went on. To induce men to enlist, debts were forgiven and civil actions suspended. Criminals were released from jail on condition of serving. Three caravels were impressed into the service of the crown for a time unlimited; and the rent and

The three famous caravels; the Santa Maria.

maintenance of two of these vessels for two months was to be paid by the town.

The largest caravel, called the Santa Maria or Capitana, belonged to Juan de La Cosa, a Biscayan mariner whose name was soon to become famous.<sup>1</sup> He now commanded her, with another consummate sailor, Sancho Ruiz, for his pilot. This single-decked craft, about ninety feet in length by twenty feet breadth of beam, was the Admiral's flag-ship. The second caravel, called

The Pinta.

the Pinta, a much swifter vessel, was commanded by Martin Pinzon. She

belonged to two citizens of Palos, Gomez Rascon and Cristobal Quintero, who were now in her crew, sulky and ready for mischief. The third and

The Niña.

smallest caravel, the Niña ("Baby"), had for her commander Vicente Yañez

Pinzon, the youngest of the brothers, now about thirty years of age. Neither the Pinta nor the Niña were decked amidships. On board the three caravels were just ninety persons.<sup>2</sup> And so they

<sup>1</sup> Navarrete, *Biblioteca marítima*, tom. ii. pp. 208, 209.

<sup>2</sup> The accounts of the armament are well summed up and discussed in HARRISSE, tom. i. pp. 405-408. Eighty-seven names, out

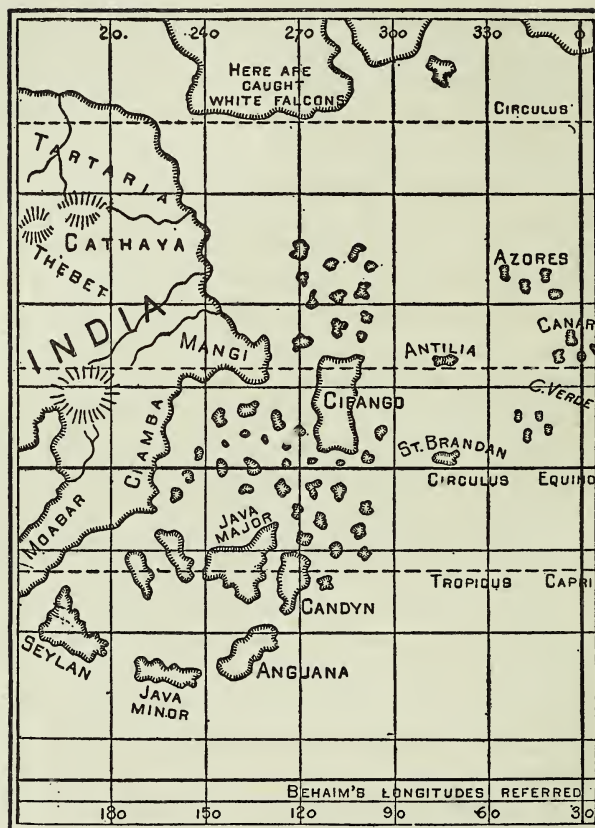
set sail from Palos on Friday, August 3, 1492, half an hour before sunrise, and by sunset had run due south five and forty geographical miles, when they shifted their course a couple of points to starboard and stood for the Canaries.

No thought of Vinland is betrayed in these proceedings. Columbus was aiming at the northern end of Cipango (Japan). Upon Toscanelli's map, which he carried with him, the great island of Cipango extends from  $5^{\circ}$  to about  $28^{\circ}$  north latitude. He evidently aimed at the northern end of Cipango as being directly on the route to Zaiton (Chang-chow) and other Chinese cities mentioned by Marco Polo. Accordingly he began by running down to the Canaries, in order that he might sail thence due west on the 28th parallel without shifting his course by a single point until he should see the coast

They go to the Canaries and are delayed there.

of Japan looming up before him.<sup>1</sup> On this preliminary run signs of mischief began already to show themselves. The Pinta's rudder was broken and unshipped, and Columbus suspected her two angry and chafing owners of having done it on purpose, in order that they and their vessel might be left behind. The Canaries at this juncture merited the name of Fortunate Islands; fortunately they, alone among African islands, were Spanish, so that Columbus could stop there and make repairs. While this was going on the sailors of the ninety, have been recovered, and the list is given below, Appendix C.

<sup>1</sup> "Para de allí tomar mi derrota, y navegar tanto que yo llegase á las Indias," he says in his journal, Navarrete, *Coleccion de viages*, tom. i. p. 3.



Martin Behaim's Globe, 1492,

<sup>1</sup> Martin Behaim was born at Nuremberg in 1436, and is said to have been a pupil of the celebrated astronomer, Regiomontanus, author of the first almanac published in Europe, and of Ephemerides, of priceless value to navigators. He visited Portugal about 1480, invented a new kind of astrolabe, and sailed with it in 1484 as cosmographer in Diego Cam's voyage to the Congo. On his return to Lisbon he was knighted, and presently went to live on the island of Fayal, of which his wife's father was



reduced to Mercator's projection.<sup>1</sup>

governor. He was a friend of Columbus. Toward 1492 he visited Nuremberg, to look after some family affairs, and while there "he gratified some of his townspeople by embodying in a globe the geographical views which prevailed in the maritime countries; and the globe was finished before Columbus had yet accomplished his voyage. The next year (1493) Behaim returned to Portugal; and after having been sent to the Low Countries on a diplomatic mission, he was captured by English cruisers and

were scared out of their wits by an eruption of Teneriffe, which they deemed an omen of evil, and it was also reported that some Portuguese caravels were hovering in those waters, with intent to capture Columbus and carry him off to Lisbon.

At length, on the 6th of September, they set sail from Gomera, but were becalmed and had made only thirty miles by the night of the 8th. The breeze then freshened, and when next day the shores of Ferro, the last of the Canaries, sank from sight on the eastern horizon, many of the sailors loudly lamented their unseemly fate, and cried and sobbed like children. Columbus well understood the difficulty of dealing with these men. He provided against one chief source of discontent by keeping two different reckonings, a true one for himself

Columbus  
starts for  
Japan, Sept.  
6, 1492.

carried to England. Escaping finally, and reaching the Continent, he passes from our view in 1494, and is scarcely heard of again." (Winsor, *Narr. and Crit. Hist.*, ii. 104.) He died in May, 1506. A ridiculous story that he anticipated Columbus in the discovery of America originated in the misunderstanding of an interpolated passage in the Latin text of Schedel's *Registrum*, Nuremberg, 1493, p. 290 (the so-called *Nuremberg Chronicle*). See Winsor, *op. cit.* ii. 34; Major's *Prince Henry*, p. 326; Humboldt, *Examen critique*, tom. i. p. 256; Murr, *Diplomatische Geschichte des Ritters Behaim*, Nuremberg, 1778; Cladera, *Investigaciones históricas*, Madrid, 1794; HARRISSE, *Bibliotheca Americana Vetusissima*, pp. 37-43. — The globe made by Behaim may now be seen in the city hall at Nuremberg. It "is made of *papier-maché*, covered with gypsum, and over this a parchment surface received the drawing; it is twenty inches in diameter." (Winsor, *op. cit.* ii. 105.) The portion west of the 330th meridian is evidently copied from Toscanelli's map. I give below (p. 429) a sketch (from Winsor, after Ruge's *Geschichte des Zeitalters der Entdeckungen*, p. 230) of Behaim's ocean, with the outline of the American continent superimposed in the proper place.

and a false one for his officers and crews. He was shrewd enough not to overdo it and awaken distrust. Thus after a twenty-four hours' run of 180 miles on September 10, he reported it as 144 miles; next day the run was 120 miles and he announced it as 108, and so on. But for this prudent if somewhat questionable device, it is not unlikely that the first week of October would have witnessed a mutiny in which Columbus would have been either thrown overboard or forced to turn back.

The weather was delicious, and but for the bug-a-boos that worried those poor sailors it would have been a most pleasant voyage. Chief among the imaginary terrors were three which deserve especial mention. At nightfall on September 13 the ships had crossed the magnetic line of no variation, and Columbus was astonished to see that the compass-needle, instead of pointing a little to the right of the pole-star, began Deflection of the needle. to sway toward the left, and next day this deviation increased. It was impossible to hide such a fact from the sharp eyes of the pilots, and all were seized with alarm at the suspicion that this witch instrument was beginning to play them some foul trick in punishment of their temerity; but Columbus was ready with an ingenious astronomical explanation, and their faith in the profundity of his knowledge prevailed over their terrors.

The second alarm came on September 16, when they struck into vast meadows of floating seaweeds and grasses, abounding in tunny fish and crabs. They had now come more than 800 miles from

Ferro and were entering the wonderful Sargasso Sea, that region of the Atlantic six times as large as France, where vast tangles of vegetation grow upon the surface of water that is more than 2,000 fathoms deep, and furnish sustenance for an untold wealth of fishy life.<sup>1</sup> To

<sup>1</sup> The situation of this Sargasso region in mid-ocean seems to be determined by its character as a quiet neutral ground between the great ocean-currents that flow past it on every side. Sargasso plants are found elsewhere upon the surface of the waves, but nowhere else do they congregate as here. There are reasons for supposing that in ancient times this region extended nearer to the African coast. Skylax (*Periplus*, cap. 109) says that beyond Kerne, at the mouth of Rio d' Ouro the sea cannot be navigated on account of the mud and seaweed. Sataspes, on his return to Persia, B. C. 470, told King Xerxes that his voyage failed because his ship stopped or was stuck fast. (Herodotus, iv. 43.) Festus Avienus mentions vast quantities of seaweed in the ocean west of the Pillars of Hercules: —

Exsuperat autem gurgitem fucus frequens  
Atque impeditur æstus ex uligine . . .  
Sic nulla late flabra propellunt ratem,  
Sic segnis humor æquoris pigri stupet.  
Adjicit et illud, plurimum inter gurgites  
Exstare fucum, et sæpe virgulti, vice  
Retinere puppim, etc.

Avienus, *Ora Maritima*, 108, 117.

See also Aristotle, *Meteorol.*, ii. 1, 14; Pseudo-Aristotle, *De Mirab. Auscult.*, p. 106; Theophrastus, *Historia plantarum*, iv. 7; Jornandes, *De rebus Geticis*, apud Muratori, tom. i. p. 191; according to Strabo (iii. 2, § 7) tunny fish were caught in abundance in the ocean west of Spain, and were highly valued for the table on account of their fatness which was due to submarine vegetables on which they fed. Possibly the reports of these Sargasso meadows may have had some share in suggesting to Plato his notion of a huge submerged island Atlantis (*Timæus*, 25; *Kritias*, 108; cf. the notion of a viscous sea in Plutarch, *De facie in Orbe Luna*, 26). Plato's fancy has furnished a theme for much wild speculation. See, for example, Bailly, *Lettres sur l'Atlantide de Platon*, Paris, 1779. The belief that there can ever have been such an island in that part of the Atlantic is disposed of by the fact that the ocean

the eye of the mariner the Sargasso Sea presents somewhat the appearance of an endless green prairie, but modern ships plough through it with ease and so did the caravels of Columbus at first. After two or three days, however, the wind being light, their progress was somewhat impeded. It was not strange that the crews were frightened at such a sight. It seemed uncanny and weird, and revived ancient fancies about mysterious impassable seas and overbold mariners whose ships had been stuck fast in them. The more practical spirits were afraid of running aground upon submerged shoals, but all were somewhat reassured on this point when it was found that their longest plummet-lines failed to find bottom.

On September 22 the journal reports "no more grass." They were in clear water again, and more than 1,400 geographical miles from the Canaries.

there is nowhere less than two miles in depth. See the beautiful map of the Atlantic sea-bottom in Alexander Agassiz's *Three Cruises of the Blake*, Boston, 1888, vol. i. p. 108, and compare chap. vi. of that noble work, on "The Permanence of Continents and of Oceanic Basins;" see also Wallace's *Island Life*, chap. vi. It was formerly supposed that the Sargasso plants grow on the sea-bottom, and becoming detached rise to the surface (Peter Martyr, *De rebus oceanicis*, dec. iii. lib. v. p. 53; Humboldt, *Personal Narrative*, book i. chap. i.); but it is now known that they are simply rooted in the surface water itself. "L'accumulation de ces plantes marines est l'exemple le plus frappant de plantes congénères réunies sur le même point. Ni les forêts colossales de l'Himalaya, ni les graminées qui s'étendent à perte de vue dans les savanes américaines ou les steppes sibériens ne rivalisent avec ces prairies océaniques. Jamais sur un espace aussi étendu, ne se rencontrent de telles masses de plantes semblables. Quand on a vu la mer des Sargasses, on n'oublie point un pareil spectacle." Paul Gaffarel, "La Mer des Sargasses," *Bulletin de Géographie*, Paris, 1872, 6<sup>e</sup> série, tom. iv. p. 622.

A third source of alarm had already begun to disturb the sailors. They were discovering much more than they had bargained for. They were in the belt of the trade winds, and as the gentle but unfailing breeze wafted them steadily westward, doubts began to arise as to whether it would ever be possible to return. Fortunately soon after this question began to be discussed, the wind, jealous of its character for capriciousness even there, veered into the southwest.

By September 25 the Admiral's chief difficulty had come to be the impatience of his crews at not finding land. On that day there was a mirage, or some such illusion, which Columbus and all hands supposed to be a coast in front of them, and hymns of praise were sung, but at dawn next day they were cruelly undeceived. Flights of strange birds and other signs of land kept raising hopes which were presently dashed again, and the men passed through alternately hot and cold fits of exultation and dejection. Such mockery seemed to show that they were entering a realm of enchantment. Somebody, perhaps one of the released jail-birds, hinted that if a stealthy thrust should happen some night to push the Admiral overboard, it could be plausibly said that he had slipped and fallen while star-gazing. His situation grew daily more perilous, and the fact that he was an Italian commanding Spaniards did not help him. Perhaps what saved him was their vague belief in his superior knowledge; they may have felt that they should need him in going back.

By October 4 there were ominous symptoms of mutiny, and the anxiety of Columbus was evinced in the extent of his bold understatement of that



Martin Behaim's Atlantic Ocean (with outline of American continent superimposed).

day's run, — 138 miles instead of the true figure 189. For some days his pilots had been begging him to change his course; perhaps they had passed between islands. Anything for a change! On the 7th at sunrise, they had come 2,724 geographical miles from the Canaries, which was farther than the Admiral's estimate of the distance to Cipango; but according to his false statement of the runs, it appeared that they had come scarcely 2,200 miles. This leads one to suspect that in stating the length of the voyage, as he had so often done, at 700 leagues,

Change of  
course from  
W. to W. S. W.

he may have purposely made it out somewhat shorter than he really believed it to be. But now after coming more than 2,500 miles he began to fear that he might be sailing past Cipango on the north, and so he shifted his course two points to larboard, or west-southwest. If a secret knowledge of Vinland had been his guiding-star he surely would not have turned his helm that way; but a glance at the Toscanelli map shows what was in his mind. Numerous flights of small birds confirmed his belief that land at the southwest was not far off. The change of direction was probably fortunate. If he had persisted in keeping on the parallel, 720 miles would have brought him to the coast of Florida, a little south of Cape Malabar. After the change he had but 505 miles of water before him, and the temper of the sailors was growing more dangerous with every mile,<sup>1</sup> — until October 11, when the signs of land became unmistakable, and the wildest excitement prevailed. A reward of 10,000 maravedis had been promised to the person who should first discover land, and ninety pair of eyes were strained that night with looking. About ten o'clock the Admiral, standing on the tower-like poop of his vessel, saw a distant light moving as if somebody were running along

<sup>1</sup> The often-repeated story that a day or two before the end of the voyage Columbus capitulated with his crew, promising to turn back if land were not seen within three days, rests upon the single and relatively inferior authority of Oviedo. It is not mentioned by Las Casas or Bernaldez or Peter Martyr or Ferdinand Columbus, and it is discredited by the tone of the Admiral's journal, which shows as unconquerable determination on the last day of the voyage as on any previous day. Cf. Irving, vol. i. p. 187.

the shore with a torch. This interpretation was doubted, but a few hours later a sailor on the *Pinta* saw land distinctly, and soon it was visible to all, a long low coast about five miles distant. This was at two in the morning of Friday, October 12,<sup>1</sup> — just ten weeks since they had sailed from Palos, just thirty-three days since they had lost sight of the coast of Ferro. The sails were now taken in, and the ships lay to, awaiting the dawn.

Land ahead !  
Oct. 12 (N. S.  
21), 1492.

At daybreak the boats were lowered and Columbus, with a large part of his company, went ashore. Upon every side were trees of unknown kinds, and the landscape seemed exceedingly beautiful. Confident that they must have attained the object for which they had set sail, the crews were wild with exultation. Their heads were dazed with fancies of princely fortunes close at hand. The officers embraced Columbus or kissed his hands, while the sailors threw themselves at his feet, craving pardon and favour.

The crews go  
ashore.

These proceedings were watched with unutterable amazement and awe by a multitude of men, women, and children of cinnamon hue, different from any kind of people the Spaniards had ever seen. All were stark naked and most of them were more or less greased and painted. They thought that the ships were sea-monsters and the white men supernatural creatures

The aston-  
ished natives.

<sup>1</sup> Applying the Gregorian Calendar, or "new style," it becomes the 21st. The four hundredth anniversary will properly fall on October 21, 1892.

descended from the sky.<sup>1</sup> At first they fled in terror as these formidable beings came ashore, but presently, as they found themselves unmolested, curiosity began to overcome fear, and they slowly approached the Spaniards, stopping at every few paces to prostrate themselves in adoration. After a time, as the Spaniards received them with encouraging nods and smiles, they waxed bold enough to come close to the visitors and pass their hands over them, doubtless to make sure that all this marvel was a reality and not a mere vision. Experiences in Africa had revealed the eagerness of barbarians to trade off their possessions for trinkets, and now the Spaniards began exchanging glass beads and hawks' bells for cotton yarn, tame parrots, and small gold ornaments. Some sort of conversation in dumb show went on, and Columbus naturally interpreted everything in such wise as to fit his theories. Whether the natives understood him or not when he asked them where they got their gold, at any rate they pointed to the south, and thus confirmed Columbus in his suspicion that he had come to some island a little to the north of the opulent Cipango. He soon found that it was

Guanahani:  
where was it?

a small island, and he understood the name of it to be Guanahani. He took formal possession of it for Castile, just as the discoverers of the Cape Verde islands and the Guinea coasts had taken possession of those places for

<sup>1</sup> This is a common notion among barbarians. "The Polyynesians imagine that the sky descends at the horizon and encloses the earth. Hence they call foreigners *papalangi*, or 'heaven-bursters,' as having broken in from another world outside." Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. ii. p. 268.

Portugal; and he gave it a Christian name, San Salvador. That name has since the seventeenth century been given to Cat island, but perhaps in pursuance of a false theory of map-makers; it is not proved that Cat island is the Guanahani of Columbus. All that can positively be asserted of Guanahani is that it was one of the Bahamas; there has been endless discussion as to which one, and the question is not easy to settle. Perhaps the theory of Captain Gustavus Fox, of the United States navy, is on the whole best supported. Captain Fox maintains that the true Guanahani was the little island now known as Samana or Atwood's Cay.<sup>1</sup> The problem well illustrates the difficulty in identifying any route from even a good description of landmarks, without the help of persistent proper names, especially after the lapse of time has somewhat altered the landmarks. From this point of view it is a very interesting problem and has its lessons for us; otherwise it is of no importance.

A cruise of ten days among the Bahamas, with visits to four of the islands, satisfied Columbus that he was in the ocean just east of Cathay, for Marco Polo had described it as studded with thousands of spice-bearing islands, and the Catalan map shows that some of these were supposed to be inhabited by naked savages. To be sure, he could not find any spices or

Groping for  
Cipango and  
the route to  
Quinsay.

<sup>1</sup> "An Attempt to solve the Problem of the First Landing Place of Columbus in the New World," in *United States Coast and Geodetic Survey — Report for 1880 — Appendix 18*, Washington, 1882.

valuable drugs, but the air was full of fragrance and the trees and herbs were strange in aspect and might mean anything ; so for a while he was ready to take the spices on trust. Upon inquiries about gold the natives always pointed to the south, apparently meaning Cipango ; and in that direction Columbus steered on the 25th of October, intending to stay in that wealthy island long enough to obtain all needful information concerning its arts and commerce. Thence a sail of less than ten days would bring him to the Chinese coast, along which he might comfortably cruise northwesterly as far as Quinsay and deliver to the Great Khan a friendly letter with which Ferdinand and Isabella had provided him. Alas, poor Columbus — unconscious prince of discoverers — groping here in Cuban waters for the way to a city on the other side of the globe and to a sovereign whose race had more than a century since been driven from the throne and expelled from the very soil of Cathay ! Could anything be more pathetic, or better illustrate the profound irony with which our universe seems to be governed ?

On reaching Cuba the Admiral was charmed with the marvellous beauty of the landscape, — a point in which he seems to have been unusually sensitive. He found pearl oysters along the shore, and although no splendid cities as yet appeared, he did not doubt that he had reached Cipango. But his attempts at talking with the amazed natives only served to darken counsel. He understood them to say that Cuba was part of the Asiatic continent,

Columbus reaches Cuba, and sends envoys to find a certain Asiatic prince.

and that there was a king in the neighbourhood who was at war with the Great Khan! So he sent two messengers to seek this refractory potentate, — one of them a converted Jew acquainted with Arabic, a language sometimes heard far eastward in Asia, as Columbus must have known. These envoys found pleasant villages, with large houses, surrounded with fields of such unknown vegetables as maize, potatoes, and tobacco; they saw men and women smoking cigars,<sup>1</sup> and little dreamed that in that fragrant and soothing herb there was a richer source of revenue than the spices of the East. They passed acres of growing cotton and saw in the houses piles of yarn waiting to be woven into rude cloth or twisted into nets for hammocks. But they found neither cities nor kings, neither gold nor spices, and after a tedious quest returned, somewhat disappointed, to the coast.

Columbus seems now to have become perplexed, and to have vacillated somewhat in his purposes. If this was the continent of Asia it was nearer than he had supposed, and how far mistaken he had been in his calculations no one could tell. But where was Cipango? He gathered from the natives that there was a

Columbus  
turns east-  
ward; Pinzon  
deserts him.

<sup>1</sup> The first recorded mention of tobacco is in Columbus's diary for November 20, 1492: — "Hallaron los dos cristianos por el camino mucha gente que atravesaba á sus pueblos, mugeres y hombres con un tizon en la mano, yerbas para tomar sus sahumerios que acostumbraban," i. e. "the two Christians met on the road a great many people going to their villages, men and women with brands in their hands, made of herbs for taking their customary smoke." Navarrete, tom. i. p. 51.

great island to the southeast, abounding in gold, and so he turned his prows in that direction. On the 20th of November he was deserted by Martin Pinzon, whose ship could always outsail the others. It seems to have been Pinzon's design to get home in advance with such a story as would enable him to claim for himself an undue share of credit for the discovery of the Indies. This was the earliest instance of a kind of treachery such as too often marred the story of Spanish exploration and conquest in the New World.

For a fortnight after Pinzon's desertion Columbus crept slowly eastward along the coast of Cuba, now and then landing to examine the country and its products; and it seemed to him that besides pearls and mastic and aloes he found in the rivers indications of gold. When he reached the cape at the end of the island he named it Alpha and Omega, as being the extremity of Asia, — Omega from the Portuguese point of view, Alpha from his own. On the 6th of December he landed upon the northwestern coast of the island of Hayti, which he called Española, Hispaniola, or "Spanish land."<sup>1</sup> Here, as the natives seemed to tell him of a region to the southward and quite inland which abounded in gold, and which they called Cibao, the Admiral at once caught upon the apparent similarity of sounds and fancied that Cibao must be Cipango, and that

Columbus  
arrives at  
Hayti and  
thinks it must  
be Japan.

<sup>1</sup> Not "Little Spain," as the form of the word, so much like a diminutive, might seem to indicate. It is simply the feminine of *Español*, "Spanish," sc. *tierra* or *isla*. Columbus believed that the island was larger than Spain. See his letter to Gabriel Sanchez, in Harriette, tom. i. p. 428.

at length he had arrived upon that island of marvels. It was much nearer the Asiatic mainland (i. e. Cuba) than he had supposed, but then, it was beginning to appear that in any case somebody's geography must be wrong. Columbus was enchanted with the scenery. "The land is elevated," he says, "with many mountains and peaks . . . most beautiful, of a thousand varied forms, accessible, and full of trees of endless varieties, so tall that they seem to touch the sky; and I have been told that they never lose their foliage. The nightingale [i. e. some kind of thrush] and other small birds of a thousand kinds were singing in the month of November [December] when I was there."<sup>1</sup> Before he had done much toward exploring this paradise, a sudden and grave mishap quite altered his plans. On Christmas morning, between midnight and dawn, owing to careless disobedience of orders on the part of the helmsman, the flag-ship struck upon a sand-bank near the present site of Port au Paix. All attempts to get her afloat were unavailing, and the waves soon beat her to pieces.

Wreck of the  
Santa Maria,  
Dec. 25, 1492.

This catastrophe brought home, with startling force, to the mind of Columbus, the fact that the news of his discovery of land was not yet known in Europe. As for the Pinta and her insubordinate commander, none could say whether they would ever be seen again or whether their speedy arrival in Spain might not portend more harm than good to Colum-

Columbus  
decides to go  
back to Spain.

<sup>1</sup> Columbus to Santangel, February 15, 1493 (Navarrete, tom. i. p. 168).

bus. His armament was now reduced to the little undecked Niña alone, such a craft as we should deem about fit for a summer excursion on Long Island Sound. What if his party should all perish, or be stranded helpless on these strange coasts, before any news of their success should reach the ears of friends in Europe! Then the name of Columbus would serve as a by-word for foolhardiness, and his mysterious fate would simply deter other expeditions from following in the same course. Obviously the first necessity of the situation was to return to Spain immediately and report what had already been done. Then it would be easy enough to get ships and men for a second voyage.

This decision led to the founding of an embryo colony upon Hispaniola. There was not room enough for all the party to go in the Niña, and quite a number begged to be left behind, because they found life upon the island lazy and the natives, especially the women, seemed well-disposed toward them. So a blockhouse was built out of the wrecked ship's

Building of  
the block-  
house, La  
Navidad.

timbers and armed with her guns, and in commemoration of that eventful Christmas it was called Fort Nativity (*La Navidad*).

Here forty men were left behind, with provisions enough for a whole year, and on January 4, 1493, the rest of the party went on board the Niña and set sail for Spain. Two days later in following the northern coast of Hispaniola they encountered the Pinta, whose commander had been

Meeting with  
Pinzon.

delayed by trading with the natives and by finding some gold. Pinzon tried to explain his sudden disappearance by alleging that

stress of weather had parted him from his comrades, but his excuses were felt to be lame and improbable. However it may have been with his excuses, there was no doubt as to the lameness of his foremast; it had been too badly sprung to carry much sail, so that the *Pinta* could not again run away from her consort.

On this return voyage the Admiral, finding the trade winds dead against him, took a northeasterly course until he had passed the thirty-seventh parallel and then headed straight toward Spain. On the 12th of February a storm was brewing, and during the next four days it

Terrible storm  
in mid-ocean,  
Feb., 1493.

raged with such terrific violence that it is a wonder how those two frail caravels ever came out of it. They were separated this time not to meet again upon the sea. Expecting in all likelihood to be engulfed in the waves with his tiny craft, Columbus sealed and directed to Ferdinand and Isabella two brief reports of his discovery, written upon parchment. Each of these he wrapped in a cloth and inclosed in the middle of a large cake of wax, which was then securely shut up in a barrel. One of the barrels was flung into the sea, the other remained standing on the little quarter-deck to await the fate of the caravel. The anxiety was not lessened by the sight of land on the 15th, for it was impossible to approach it so as to go ashore, and there was much danger of being dashed to pieces.

At length on the 18th, the storm having abated, the ship's boat went ashore and found that it was the island of St. Mary, one of the Azores. It is

worthy of note that such skilful sailors as the Niña's captain, Vicente Yañez Pinzon, and the pilot Ruiz were so confused in their reckoning as to suppose themselves near the Madeiras, whereas Columbus had correctly maintained that they were approaching the Azores, — a good instance of his consummate judgment in nautical questions.<sup>1</sup> From the Portuguese governor of the island this Spanish company met with a very ungracious reception. A party of sailors whom Columbus sent ashore to a small chapel of the Virgin, to give thanks for their deliverance from shipwreck, were seized and held as prisoners for five days. It afterwards appeared that this was done in pursuance of general instructions from the king of Portugal to the governors of his various islands. If Columbus had gone ashore he would probably have been arrested himself. As it was, he took such a high tone and threatened to such good purpose that the governor of St. Mary was fain to give up his prisoners for fear of bringing on another war between Portugal and Castile.

Having at length got away from this unfriendly island, as the Niña was making her way toward Cape St. Vincent and within 400 miles of it, she was seized by another fierce tempest and driven upon the coast of Portugal, where Columbus and his crew were glad of a chance to run into the river Tagus for shelter. The news of his voyage and his discoveries aroused intense excitement in Lisbon. Astonishment was mingled with

Cold reception  
at the Azores.

Columbus is  
driven ashore  
in Portugal,  
where the  
king is advised  
to have him  
assassinated;

<sup>1</sup> Las Casas, tom. i. pp. 443, 449.

chagrin at the thought that the opportunity for all this glory and profit had first been offered to Portugal and foolishly lost. The king even now tried to persuade himself that Columbus had somehow or other been trespassing upon the vast and vague undiscovered dominions granted to the Crown of Portugal by Pope Eugenius IV. Some of the king's counsellors are said to have urged him to have Columbus assassinated; it would be easy enough to provoke such a high-spirited man into a quarrel and then run him through the body.<sup>1</sup> To clearer heads, however, the imprudence of such a course was manifest. It was already impossible to keep the news of the discovery from reaching Spain, and Portugal could not afford to go to war with her stronger neighbour.

but to offend  
Spain so  
grossly would  
be dangerous.

In fact even had John II. been base enough to resort to assassination, which seems quite incompatible with the general character of Lope de Vega's "perfect prince," Columbus was now too important a personage to be safely interfered with. So he was invited to court and made much of. On the 13th of March he set sail again and arrived in the harbour of Palos at noon of the 15th. His little caravel was promptly recognized by the people, and as her story flew from mouth to mouth all the business of the town was at an end for that day.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This story rests upon the explicit statement of a contemporary Portuguese historian of high authority, Garcia de Resende, *Chronica del Rey Dom João II.*, Lisbon, 1622, cap. clxiv. (written about 1516); see also Vasconcellos, *Vida del Rey Don Juan II.*, Madrid, 1639, lib. vi.

<sup>2</sup> "When they learnt that she returned in triumph from the discovery of a world, the whole community broke forth into trans-

Towards evening, while the bells were ringing and the streets brilliant with torches, another vessel entered the harbour and dropped anchor. She was none other than the Pinta! The storm had driven her to Bayonne, whence Martin Pinzon instantly despatched a message to Ferdinand and Isabella, making great claims for himself and asking permission to wait upon them with a full account of the discovery. As soon as practicable he made his way to Palos, but when on arriving he saw the Niña already anchored in the harbour his guilty heart failed him. He took advantage of the general hubbub to slink ashore as quickly and quietly as possible, and did not dare to show himself until after the Admiral had left for Seville. The news from Columbus reached the sovereigns before they had time to reply to the message of Pinzon; so when their answer came to him it was cold and stern and forbade him to appear in their presence. Pinzon was worn out with the hardships of the homeward voyage, and this crushing reproof was more than he could bear. His sudden death, a few days afterward, was generally attributed to chagrin.<sup>1</sup>

From Seville the Admiral was summoned to attend court at Barcelona, where he was received with triumphal honours. He was directed to

ports of joy." Irving's *Columbus*, vol. i. p. 318. This is projecting our present knowledge into the past. We now know that Columbus had discovered a new world. He did not so much as suspect that he had done anything of the sort; neither did the people of Palos.

<sup>1</sup> Charlevoix, *Histoire de l'isle Espagnole, ou de St. Domingue*, Paris, 1730, liv. ii.; Muñoz, *Historia de las Indias ó Nuevo Mundo*, Madrid, 1793, lib. iv. § 14.

seat himself in the presence of the sovereigns, a courtesy usually reserved for royal personages.<sup>1</sup> Intense interest was felt in his specimens of stuffed birds and small mammals, his live parrots, his collection

Columbus is received by the sovereigns at Barcelona, April, 1493.

of herbs which he supposed to have medicinal virtues, his few pearls and trinkets of gold, and especially his six painted and bedizened barbarians, the survivors of ten with whom he had started from Hispaniola. Since in the vague terminology of that time the remote and scarcely known parts of Asia were called the Indies, and since the islands and coasts just discovered were Indies, of course these red men must be Indians. So Columbus had already named them in his first letter written from the Niña, off the Azores, sent by special messenger from Palos, and now in April, 1493, printed at Barcelona, containing the particulars of his discovery, — a letter appropriately addressed to the worthy Santangel but for whose timely intervention he might have ridden many a weary league on

<sup>1</sup> He was also allowed to quarter the royal arms with his own, "which consisted of a group of golden islands amid azure billows. To these were afterwards added five anchors, with the celebrated motto, well known as being carved on his sepulchre." Prescott's *Ferdinand and Isabella*, pt. i. chap. vii. This statement about the motto is erroneous. See below, p. 514. Considering the splendour of the reception given to Columbus, and the great interest felt in his achievement, Mr. Prescott is surprised at finding no mention of this occasion in the local annals of Barcelona, or in the royal archives of Aragon. He conjectures, with some probability, that the cause of the omission may have been what an American would call "sectional" jealousy. This Cathay and Cipango business was an affair of Castile's, and, as such, quite beneath the notice of patriotic Aragonese archivists! That is the way history has too often been treated. With most people it is only a kind of ancestor worship.

that mule of his to no good purpose.<sup>1</sup> It was generally assumed without question that the Admiral's theory of his discovery must be correct, that the coast of Cuba must be the eastern extremity of China, that the coast of Hispaniola must be the northern extremity of Cipango, and that a direct route — much shorter than that which Portugal had so long been seeking — had now been found to those lands of illimitable wealth described by Marco Polo.<sup>2</sup> To be sure Columbus had not

<sup>1</sup> The unique copy of this first edition of this Spanish letter is a small folio of two leaves, or four pages. It was announced for sale in Quaritch's Catalogue, April 16, 1891, No. 111, p. 47, for £1,750. Evidently most book-lovers will have to content themselves with the facsimile published in London, 1891, price two guineas. A unique copy of a Spanish reprint in small quarto, made in 1493, is preserved in the Ambrosian library at Milan. In 1889 Messrs. Ellis & Elvey, of London, published a facsimile *alleged* to have been made from an edition of about the same date as the Ambrosian quarto; but there are good reasons for believing that these highly respectable publishers have been imposed upon. It is a time just now when fictitious literary discoveries of this sort may command a high price, and the dealer in early Americana must keep his eyes open. See Quaritch's note, *op. cit.* p. 49; and Justin Winsor's letter in *The Nation*, April 9, 1891, vol. lli. p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> "The lands, therefore, which Columbus had visited were called the West Indies; and as he seemed to have entered upon a vast region of unexplored countries, existing in a state of nature, the whole received the comprehensive appellation of the New World." Irving's *Columbus*, vol. i. p. 333. These are very grave errors, again involving the projection of our modern knowledge into the past. The lands which Columbus had visited were called simply the Indies; it was not until long after his death, and after the crossing of the Pacific ocean, that they were distinguished from the East Indies. The *New World* was not at first a "comprehensive appellation" for the countries discovered by Columbus; it was at first applied to one particular region never visited by him, viz. to that portion of the southeastern coast of South America first explored by Vesputius. See vol. ii. pp. 129, 130.

as yet seen the evidences of this Oriental splendour, and had been puzzled at not finding them, but he felt confident that he had come very near them and would come full upon them in a second voyage. There was nobody who knew enough to refute these opinions,<sup>1</sup> and really why should not this great geographer, who had accomplished so much already which people had scouted as impossible, — why should he not know what he was about? It was easy enough now to get men and money for the second voyage. When the Admiral sailed from Cadiz on September 25, 1493, it was with seventeen ships carrying 1,500 men. Their dreams were of the marble palaces of Quinsay, of isles of spices, and the treasures of Prester John. The sovereigns wept for joy as they thought that such untold riches were vouchsafed them by the special decree of Heaven, as a reward for having overcome the Moor at Granada and banished the Jews from Spain.<sup>2</sup> Columbus shared these views and

General excitement at the news that a way to the Indies had been found.

<sup>1</sup> Peter Martyr, however, seems to have entertained some vague doubts, inasmuch as this assumed nearness of the China coast on the west implied a greater eastward extension of the Asiatic continent than seemed to him probable: — “Insulas reperit plures; has esse, de quibus fit apud cosmographos mentio extra oceanum orientalem, adjacentes Indiæ arbitrantur. Nec inficior ego penitus, *quamvis sphaeræ magnitudo aliter sentire videatur*; neque enim desunt qui parvo tractu a finibus Hispaniæ distare littus Indicum putent.” *Opus Epist.*, No. 135. The italicizing is mine.

<sup>2</sup> This abominable piece of wickedness, driving 200,000 of Spain's best citizens from their homes and their native land, was accomplished in pursuance of an edict signed March 30, 1492. There is a brief account of it in Prescott's *Ferdinand and Isabella*, pt. i. chap. vi.

regarded himself as a special instrument for executing the divine decrees. He renewed his vow to rescue the Holy Sepulchre, promising within the next seven years to equip at his own expense a crusading army of 50,000 foot and 4,000 horse; within five years thereafter he would follow this with a second army of like dimensions.

Thus nobody had the faintest suspicion of what had been done. In the famous letter to Santangel there is of course not a word about a New World. The grandeur of the achievement was quite beyond the ken of the generation that witnessed it. For

This voyage  
was an event  
without any  
parallel in  
history.

we have since come to learn that in 1492 the contact between the eastern and the western halves of our planet was first really begun, and the two streams of human life which had flowed on for countless ages apart were thenceforth to mingle together. The first voyage of Columbus is thus a unique event in the history of mankind. Nothing like it was ever done before, and nothing like it can ever be done again. No worlds are left for a future Columbus to conquer. The era of which this great Italian mariner was the most illustrious representative has closed forever.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE FINDING OF STRANGE COASTS.

BUT that era did not close with Columbus, nor did he live long enough to complete the Discovery of America. Our practice of affixing specific dates to great events is on many accounts indispensable, but it is sometimes misleading. Such an event as the discovery of a pair of vast continents does not take place within a single year. When we speak of America as discovered in 1492, we do not mean that the moment Columbus landed on two or three islands of the West Indies, a full outline map of the western hemisphere from Labrador and Alaska to Cape Horn suddenly sprang into existence — like Pallas from the forehead of Zeus — in the minds of European men. Yet people are perpetually using arguments which have neither force nor meaning save upon the tacit assumption that somehow or other some such sort of thing must have happened. This grotesque fallacy lies at the bottom of the tradition which has caused so many foolish things to be said about that gallant mariner, Americus Vespucius. In geographical discussions the tendency to overlook the fact that Columbus and his immediate successors did not sail with the latest edition of Black's General Atlas in

The Discovery of America was a gradual process.

their cabins is almost inveterate ; it keeps revealing itself in all sorts of queer statements, and probably there is no cure for it except in familiarity with the long series of perplexed and struggling maps made in the sixteenth century. Properly regarded, the Discovery of America was not a single event, but a very gradual process. It was not like a case of special creation, for it was a case of evolution, and the voyage of 1492 was simply the most decisive and epoch-marking incident in that evolution. Columbus himself, after all his four eventful voyages across the Sea of Darkness, died in the belief that he had simply discovered the best and straightest route to the eastern shores of Asia. Yet from his first experiences in Cuba down to his latest voyage upon the coasts of Honduras and Veragua, he was more or less puzzled at finding things so different from what he had anticipated. If he had really known anything with accuracy about the eastern coast of Asia, he would doubtless soon have detected his fundamental error, but no European in his day had any such knowledge. In his four voyages Columbus was finding what he supposed to be parts of Asia, what we now know to have been parts of America, but what were really to him and his contemporaries neither more nor less than Strange Coasts. We have now to consider briefly his further experiences upon these strange coasts.

The second voyage of Columbus was begun in a very different mood and under very different auspices from either his former or his two subsequent

voyages. On his first departure from Palos, in 1492, all save a few devoted friends regarded him as a madman rushing upon his doom; and outside the Spanish peninsula the expedition seems to have attracted no notice. But on the second start, in 1493, all hands supposed that they were going straight to golden Cathay and to boundless riches. It was not now with groans but with pæans that they flocked on board the ships; and the occasion was observed, with more or less interest, by some people in other countries of Europe, — as in Italy, and for the moment in France and England.

At the same time with his letter to Santangel, the Admiral had despatched another account, substantially the same,<sup>1</sup> to Gabriel Sanchez,<sup>2</sup> another officer of the royal treasury. The letter to Sanchez. Several copies of a Latin translation of this letter were published at Rome, at Paris, and elsewhere, in the course of the year 1493.<sup>3</sup> The story which

<sup>1</sup> "Un duplicata de cette relation," HARRISSE, *Christophe Colomb*, tom i. p. 419.

<sup>2</sup> Often called Raphael Sanchez.

<sup>3</sup> The following epigram was added to the first Latin edition of the latter by Corbaria, Bishop of Monte-Peloso: —

*Ad Invictissimum Regem Hispaniarum:*  
 Iam nulla Hispanis tellus addenda triumphis,  
 Atque parum tantis viribus orbis erat.  
 Nunc longe eoīs regio deprensa sub undia,  
 Auctura est titulos Betice magne tuos.  
 Unde repertori incrita referenda Columbo  
 Gratia, sed summo est maior habenda deo,  
 Qui vincenda parat noua regna tibi que sibi que  
 Teque simul fortem prestat et esse pium.

These lines are thus paraphrased by M. HARRISSE: —

*To the Invincible King of the Spains:*  
 Less wide the world than the renown of Spain,  
 To swell her triumphs no new lands remain.

it contained was at once paraphrased in Italian verse by Giuliano Dati, one of the most popular poets of the age, and perhaps in the autumn of 1493 the amazing news that the Indies had been found by sailing west<sup>1</sup> was sung by street

Rejoice, Iberia! see thy fame increased!  
 Another world Columbus from the East  
 And the mid-ocean summons to thy sway!  
 Give thanks to him — but loftier homage pay  
 To God Supreme, who gives its realms to thee!  
 Greatest of monarchs, first of servants be!

*Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima*, p. 13.

The following is a literal version: — “Already there is no land to be added to the triumphs of Spain, and the earth was too small for such great deeds. Now a far country under the eastern waves has been discovered, and will be an addition to thy titles, O great Bætica! wherefore thanks are due to the illustrious discover Columbus; but greater thanks to the supreme God, who is making ready new realms to be conquered for thee and for Himself, and vouchsafes to thee to be at once strong and pious.” It will be observed that nothing is said about “another world.”

An elaborate account of these earliest and excessively rare editions is given by M. HARRISSE, *loc. cit.*

<sup>1</sup> Or, as Mr. Major carelessly puts it, “the astounding news of the discovery of a new world.” (*Select Letters of Columbus*, p. vi.) Mr. Major knows very well that no such “news” was possible for many a year after 1493; his remark is, of course, a mere slip of the pen, but if we are ever going to straighten out the tangle of misconceptions with which this subject is commonly surrounded, we must be careful in our choice of words. — As a fair specimen of the chap-book style of Dati’s stanzas, we may cite the fourteenth: —

Hor vo tornar al mio primo tractato  
 dell’isole trovate incognite a te  
 in questo anno presente questo è stato  
 nel millequattrocento novantatré,  
 uno che xpofoan colombo chiamato,  
 che è stato in corte del prefetto Re  
 ha molte volte questa stimolato,  
 el Re ch’erchi accrescere il suo stato.

M. HARRISSE gives the following version: —

Back to my theme, O Listener, turn with me  
 And hear of islands all unknown to thee!

urchins in Florence. We are also informed, in an ill-vouched but not improbable clause in Ramusio, that not far from that same time the news was heard with admiration in London, where it was pronounced "a thing more divine than human to sail by the West unto the East, where spices grow, by a way that was never known before;"<sup>1</sup> and it seems altogether likely that it was this news that prompted the expedition of John Cabot hereafter to be mentioned.<sup>2</sup>

The references to the discovery are very scanty, however, until after the year 1500, and extremely vague withal. For example, Bernardino de Carvajal, the Spanish ambassador at the papal court, delivered an oration in Rome on June 19, 1493, in which he said: "And Christ placed under their [Ferdinand and Isabella's] rule the Fortunate [Canary] islands, the fertility of which has been ascertained to be wonderful. And he has lately disclosed some other unknown ones towards the Indies which may be considered among the most precious things on earth; and it is believed that they will be gained

Earliest references to the discovery.

Islands whereof the grand discovery  
 Chanced in this year of fourteen ninety-three.  
 One Christopher Colombo, whose resort  
 Was ever in the King Fernando's court,  
 Bent himself still to rouse and stimulate  
 The King to swell the borders of his State.

*Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima*, p. 29.

The entire poem of sixty-eight stanzas is given in Major, *op. cit.* pp. lxxiii.-xc. It was published at Florence, Oct. 26, 1493, and was called "the story of the discovery [not of a new world, but] of the new Indian islands of Canary!" (*Storia della inventione delle nuove isole dicanaria indiane.*)

<sup>1</sup> *Raccolta di Navigazioni*, etc., Venice, 1550, tom. i. fol. 414.

<sup>2</sup> See below, vol. ii. pp. 2-15.

over to Christ by the emissaries of the king.”<sup>1</sup> Outside of the Romance countries we find one German version of the first letter of Columbus, published at Strasburg, in 1497,<sup>2</sup> and a brief allusion to the discovery in Sebastian Brandt’s famous allegorical poem, “Das Narrenschiff,” the first edition of which appeared in 1494.<sup>3</sup> The earliest distinct reference to Columbus in the English language is to be found in a translation of this poem, “The Shyppe of Fooles,” by Henry Watson, published in London by Wynkyn de Worde in 1509.

Earliest reference in English.

The purpose of Brandt’s allegory was to satirize the follies committed by all sorts and conditions of men. In the chapter, “Of hym that wyll wryte and enquire of all regyons,” it is said: “There was one that

<sup>1</sup> HARRISSE, *Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima*, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Id. p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> Auch hat man sydt in Portugall  
Und in Hyspanyen uberall  
Golt-inseln funden, und nacket lît  
Von den man vor wust sagen nît.

HARRISSE, *Bibl. Amer. Vet.*; *Additions*, p. 4.

Or, in more modern German: —

Wie man auch jüngst von Portugal  
Und Hispanien aus schier überall  
Goldinseln fand und nakte Leute,  
Von denen man erst weiss seit heute.

*Das Narrenschiff*, ed. SIMROCK, Berlin, 1872, p. 161.

In the Latin version of 1497, now in the National Library at Paris, it goes somewhat differently: —

Antea quæ fuerat priscis incognita tellus:  
Exposita est oculis & manifesta patet.  
Hesperiq; occiduq; rex Ferdinandus: in alto  
Aequore nunc gentes reperit innumeras.

HARRISSE, *op. cit.*; *Additions*, p. 7.

It will be observed that these foreign references are so ungallant, and so incorrect, as to give all the credit to Ferdinand, while poor Isabella is not mentioned!

knewe that in y<sup>e</sup> ysles of Spayne was enhabitantes. Wherefore he asked men of Kynge Ferdynandus & wente & founde them, the whiche lyved as beestes.”<sup>1</sup> Until after the middle of the sixteenth century no English chronicler mentions either Columbus or the Cabots, nor is there anywhere an indication that the significance of the discoveries in the western ocean was at all understood.<sup>2</sup>

North of the Alps and Pyrenees the interest in what was going on at the Spanish court in 1493 was probably confined to very few people. As for Venice and Genoa we have no adequate means of knowing how they felt about the matter, — a fact which in itself is significant. The interest was centred in Spain and Portugal. There it was intense and awakened fierce heart-burnings. Though John II. had not given his consent to the proposal for murdering Columbus, he appears to have seriously entertained the thought of sending a small fleet across the Atlantic as soon as possible, to take possession of some point in Cathay or Cipango and then dispute the claims of the Spaniards.<sup>3</sup> Such a summary proceeding might perhaps be defended on the ground that the grant from Pope Eugenius V. to the crown of Portugal expressly included “the Indies.” In the treaty of 1479, moreover, Spain had promised not to interfere with the discoveries and possessions of the Portuguese.

Portuguese  
claim to the  
Indies.

But whatever King John may have intended,

<sup>1</sup> HARRISSE, *op. cit.*; *Additions*, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> HARRISSE, *Jean et Sebastien Cabot*, Paris, 1882, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Vasconcellos, *Vida del Rey Don Juan II.*, Madrid, 1639, lib. vi.

Ferdinand and Isabella were too quick for him. No sooner had Columbus arrived at Barcelona than an embassy was despatched to Rome, asking for a grant of the Indies just discovered by that navigator in the service of Castile. The notorious Rodrigo Borgia, who had lately been placed in the apostolic chair as Alexander VI., was a native of Valencia in the kingdom of Aragon, and would not be likely to refuse such a request through any excess of regard for Portugal. As between the two rival powers the pontiff's arrangement was made in a spirit of even-handed justice.

Bulls of Pope  
Alexander VI.

On the 3d of May, 1493, he issued a bull conferring upon the Spanish sovereigns all lands already discovered or thereafter to be discovered in the western ocean, with jurisdiction and privileges in all respects similar to those formerly bestowed upon the crown of Portugal. This grant was made by the pope "out of our pure liberality, certain knowledge, and plenitude of apostolic power," and by virtue of "the authority of omnipotent God granted to us in St. Peter, and of the Vicarship of Jesus Christ which we administer upon the earth."<sup>1</sup> It was a substantial reward for the monarchs who had completed the overthrow of Mahometan rule in Spain, and it afforded them

<sup>1</sup> "De nostra mera liberalitate, et ex certa scientia, ac de apostolicæ potestatis plenitudine." . . . "auctoritate omnipotentis Dei nobis in beato Petro concessa, ac vicariatus Jesu Christi qua fungimur in terris." The same language is used in the second bull. Mr. Prescott (*Ferdinand and Isabella*, part i. chap. vii.) translates *certa scientia* "infallible knowledge," but in order to avoid any complications with modern theories concerning papal infallibility, I prefer to use a less technical word.

opportunities for further good work in converting the heathen inhabitants of the islands and mainland of Asia.<sup>1</sup>

On the following day Alexander issued a second bull in order to prevent any occasion for quarrel between Spain and Portugal.<sup>2</sup> He decreed that

<sup>1</sup> A year or two later the sovereigns were further rewarded with the decorative title of "Most Catholic." See Zurita, *Historia del Rey Hernando*, Saragossa, 1580, lib. ii. cap. xl.; Peter Martyr, *Epist.* clvii.

<sup>2</sup> The complete text of this bull, with Richard Eden's translation, is given at the end of this work; see below, Appendix B. The official text is in *Magnum Bullarium Romanum*, ed. Cherubini, Lyons, 1655, tom. i. p. 466. The original document received by Ferdinand and Isabella is preserved in the Archives of the Indies at Seville; it is printed entire in Navarrete, *Coleccion de viages*, tom. ii. No. 18. Another copy, less complete, may be found in Raynaldus, *Annales ecclesiastici*, Lucca, 1754, tom. xi. p. 214, No. 19-22; and another in Leibnitz, *Codex Diplomaticus*, tom. i. pt. i. p. 471. It is often called the Bull "Inter Cetera," from its opening words.

The origin of the pope's claim to apostolic authority for giving away kingdoms is closely connected with the fictitious "Donation of Constantine," an edict probably fabricated in Rome about the middle of the eighth century. The title of the old Latin text is *Edictum domini Constantini Imp.*, apud Pseudo-Isidorus, *Decretalia*. Constantine's transfer of the seat of empire from the Tiber to the Bosphorus tended greatly to increase the dignity and power of the papacy, and I presume that the fabrication of this edict, four centuries afterward, was the expression of a sincere belief that the first Christian emperor meant to leave the temporal supremacy over Italy in the hands of the Roman see. The edict purported to be such a donation from Constantine to Pope Sylvester I., but the extent and character of the donation was stated with such vagueness as to allow a wide latitude of interpretation. Its genuineness was repeatedly called in question, but belief in it seems to have grown in strength until after the thirteenth century. Leo IX., who was a strong believer in its genuineness, granted in 1054 to the Normans their conquests in Sicily and Calabria, to be held as a fief of the Roman see. (Muratori, *Annali d' Italia*, tom. vi. pt. ii. p. 245.) It was next used to sustain the papal

all lands discovered or to be discovered to the west of a meridian one hundred leagues west of

claim to suzerainty over the island of Corsica. A century later John of Salisbury maintained the right of the pope to dispose "of all *islands* on which Christ, the Sun of righteousness, hath shined," and in conformity with this opinion Pope Adrian IV. (Nicholas Breakspeare, an Englishman) authorized in 1164 King Henry II. of England to invade and conquer Ireland. (See Adrian IV., *Epist.* 76, apud Migne, *Patrologia*, tom. clxxxviii.) Dr. Lanigan, in treating of this matter, is more an Irishman than a papist, and derides "this nonsense of the pope's being the head-owner of all Christian islands." (*Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, vol. iv. p. 159.) — Gregory VII., in working up to the doctrine that all Christian kingdoms should be held as fiefs under St. Peter (Baronius, *Annales*, tom. xvii. p. 430; cf. Villemain, *Histoire de Grégoire VII.*, Paris, 1873, tom. ii. pp. 59–61), does not seem to have appealed to the Donation. Perhaps he was shrewd enough to foresee the kind of objection afterwards raised by the Albigensians, who pithily declared that if the suzerainty of the popes was derived from the Donation, then they were successors of Constantine and not of St. Peter. (Moneta Cremonensis, *Adversus Catharos et Waldenses*, ed. Ricchini, Rome, 1743, v. 2.) But Innocent IV. summarily disposed of this argument at the Council of Lyons in 1245, when he deposed the Emperor Frederick II. and King Sancho II. of Portugal, — saying that Christ himself had bestowed temporal as well as spiritual headship upon St. Peter and his successors, so that Constantine only gave up to the Church what belonged to it already. The opposite or Ghibelline theory was eloquently set forth by Dante, in his treatise *De Monarchia*; he held that inasmuch as the Empire existed before the Church, it could not be derived from it. Dante elsewhere expressed his abhorrence of the Donation: —

Abi Constantin, di quanto mal fu matre,  
Non la tua conversion, ma quella dote  
Che da te prese il primo ricco patre!

*Inferno*, xix. 115.

Similar sentiments were expressed by many of the most popular poets from the twelfth century to the sixteenth. Walther von der Vogelweide was sure that if the first Christian emperor could have foreseen the evils destined to flow from his Donation, he would have withheld it: —

the Azores and Cape Verde islands should belong to the Spaniards. Inasmuch as between the

Solte ich den pffaffen raten an den triuwen min,  
So spräche ir haut den armen zuo : se, daz ist din,  
Ir zunge stünge, unde lieze mengem man daz sin,  
Gedachten daz ouch si dur Got wæren almuosenære.  
Do gab ir erste teil der Kuenik Konstantin,  
Het er gewest, daz da von uebel kuenftik wære,  
So het er wol underkomen des riches swære,  
Wan daz si do waren kiusche, und uebermuete lære.

Hagen, *Minnesinger-Sammlung*, Leipsic, 1838, bd. i. p. 270.

Ariosto, in a passage rollicking with satire, makes his itinerant paladin find the "stinking" Donation in the course of his journey upon the moon:—

Di varii fiori ad un gran monte passa,  
Ch' ebber già buono odore, or puzzan forte,  
Questo era il dono, se però dir lece,  
Che Constantino al buon Silvestro fece.

*Orlando Furioso*, xxxiv. 80.

The Donation was finally proved to be a forgery by Laurentius Valla in 1440, in his *De falso credita et ementita Constantini donatione declamatio* (afterward spread far and wide by Ulrich von Hutten), and independently by the noble Reginald Pecock, bishop of Chichester, in his *Repressor*, written about 1447.—During the preceding century the theory of Gregory VII. and Innocent IV. had been carried to its uttermost extreme by the Franciscan monk Alvaro Pelayo, in his *De Planctu Ecclesiæ*, written at Avignon during the "Babylonish Captivity," about 1350 (printed at Venice in 1560), and by Agostino Trionfi, in his *Summa de potestate ecclesiastica*, Augsburg, 1473, an excessively rare book, of which there is a copy in the British Museum. These writers maintained that the popes were suzerains of the whole earth and had absolute power to dispose not only of all Christian kingdoms, but also of all heathen lands and powers. It was upon this theory that Eugenius IV. seems to have acted with reference to Portugal and Alexander VI. with reference to Spain. Of course there was never a time when such claims for the papacy were not denied by a large party within the Church. The Spanish sovereigns in appealing to Alexander VI. took care to hint that some of their advisers regarded them as already entitled to enjoy the fruits of their discoveries, even before obtaining the papal permission, but they did not choose to act upon that opinion (Herrera, *decad. i.*

westernmost of the Azores and the easternmost of the Cape Verde group the difference in longitude is not far from ten degrees, this description must be allowed to be somewhat vague, especially in a document emanating from "certain know-

lib. ii. cap. 4). The kings of Portugal were less reserved in their submission. In *Valasci Ferdinandi ad Innocentium octavum de obedientia oratio*, a small quarto printed at Rome about 1488, John II. did homage to the pope for the countries just discovered by Bartholomew Dias. His successor Emanuel did the same after the voyages of Gama and Vespucius. In a small quarto, *Obedientia potentissimi Emanuelis Lusitaniæ regis &c. per clarissimum juris consultum Dieghum Pacettū oratorem ad Iuliū Pont. Max.*, Rome, 1505, all the newly found lands are laid at the feet of Julius II. in a passage that ends with words worth noting: "Accipe tandem orbem ipsum terrarum, Deus enim noster es," i. e. "Accept in fine the earth itself, for thou art our God." Similar homage was rendered to Leo X. in 1513, on account of Albuquerque's conquests in Asia. — We may suspect that if the papacy had retained, at the end of the fifteenth century, anything like the overshadowing power which it possessed at the end of the twelfth, the kings of Portugal would not have been quite so unstinted in their homage. As it came to be less of a reality and more of a flourish of words, it cost less to offer it. Among some modern Catholics I have observed a disposition to imagine that in the famous bull of partition Alexander VI. acted not as supreme pontiff but merely as an arbiter, in the modern sense, between the crowns of Spain and Portugal; but such an interpretation is hardly compatible with Alexander's own words. An arbiter, as such, does not make awards by virtue of "the authority of Omnipotent God granted to us in St. Peter, and of the Vicarship of Jesus Christ which we administer upon the earth."

Since writing this note my attention has been called to Dr. Ignaz von Döllinger's *Fables respecting the Popes of the Middle Ages*, London, 1871; and I find in it a chapter on the Donation of Constantine, in which the subject is treated with a wealth of learning. Some of my brief references are there discussed at considerable length. To the references to Dante there is added a still more striking passage, where Constantine is admitted into Heaven in spite of his Donation (*Paradiso*, **xx.** 55).

ledge ;" <sup>1</sup> and it left open a source of future disputes which one would suppose the "plenitude of apostolic power" might have been worthily employed in closing. The meridian 25° W., however, would have satisfied the conditions, and the equitable intent of the arrangement is manifest. The Portuguese were left free to pursue their course of discovery and conquest along the routes which they had always preferred. King John, however, was not satisfied. He entertained vague hopes of finding spice islands, or something worth having, in the western waters ; and he wished to have the Line of Demarcation carried farther to the west.

After a year of diplomatic wrangling a treaty was signed at Tordesillas, June <sup>Treaty of Tordesillas.</sup> 7, 1494, in which Spain consented to the moving of the line to a distance of 370 leagues west from the Cape Verde islands.<sup>2</sup> It would thus on a modern map fall somewhere between the 41st and 44th meridians west of Greenwich. This amendment had important and curious consequences. It presently gave the Brazilian coast to the Portuguese, and thereupon played a leading part in the singular and complicated series of events that ended in giving the name of Americus Vesputius to that

<sup>1</sup> The language of the bull is even more vague than my version in the text. His Holiness describes the lands to be given to the Spaniards as lying "to the west and south" (versus occidentem et meridiem) of his dividing meridian. Land to the south of a meridian would be in a queer position! Probably it was meant to say that the Spaniards, once west of the papal meridian, might go south as well as north. For the king of Portugal had suggested that they ought to confine themselves to northern waters.

<sup>2</sup> For the original Spanish text of the treaty of Tordesillas, see Navarrete, tom. ii. pp. 116-130.

region, whence it was afterwards gradually extended to the whole western hemisphere.<sup>1</sup>

Already in April, 1493, without waiting for the papal sanction, Ferdinand and Isabella bent all their energies to the work of fitting out an expedition for taking possession of "the Indies." First, a department of Indian affairs was created, and at

its head was placed Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca, archdeacon of Seville: in

Juan Rodri-  
guez de Fon-  
seca.

Spain a man in high office was apt to be a clergyman. This Fonseca was all-powerful in Indian affairs for the next thirty years. He won and retained the confidence of the sovereigns by virtue of his executive ability. He was a man of coarse fibre, ambitious and domineering, cold-hearted and perfidious, with a cynical contempt — such as low-minded people are apt to call "smart" — for the higher human feelings. He was one of those ugly customers who crush, without a twinge of compunction, whatever comes in their way. The slightest opposition made him furious, and his vindictiveness was insatiable. This dexterous and pushing Fonseca held one after another the bishoprics of Badajoz, Cordova, Palencia, and Conde, the archbishopric of Rosano in Italy, together with the bishopric of Burgos, and he was also principal chaplain to Isabella and afterwards to Ferdinand. As Sir Arthur Helps observes, "the student of early American history will have a bad opinion of many Spanish bishops, if he does not discover that it is Bishop Fonseca who reap-

<sup>1</sup> See below, vol. ii. pp. 98-154.

pears under various designations.”<sup>1</sup> Sir Arthur fitly calls him “the ungodly bishop.”

The headquarters of Fonseca and of the Indian department were established at Seville, and a special Indian custom-house was set up at Cadiz. There was to be another custom-house upon the island of Hispaniola (supposed to be Japan), and a minute registry was to be kept of all ships and their crews and cargoes, going out or coming in. Nobody was to be allowed to go to the Indies for any purpose whatever without a license formally obtained. Careful regulations were made for hampering trade and making everything as vexatious as possible for traders, according to the ordinary wisdom of governments in such matters. All expenses were to be borne and all profits received by the crown of Castile, saving the rights formerly guaranteed to Columbus. The cost of the present expedition was partly defrayed with stolen money, the plunder wrung from the worthy and industrious Jews who had been driven from their homes by the infernal edict of the year before. Extensive “requisitions” were also made; in other words, when the sovereigns wanted a ship or a barrel of gunpowder they seized it, and impressed it into the good work of converting the heathen. To superintend this missionary work, a Franciscan monk<sup>2</sup> was selected who had lately distinguished

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Spanish Conquest*, vol. i. p. 487.

<sup>2</sup> Irving calls him a Benedictine, but he is addressed as “*fratri ordinis Minorum*” in the bull clothing him with apostolic authority in the Indies, June 25, 1493. See Raynaldus, *Annales ecclesiastici*, tom. xi. p. 216. I cannot imagine what M. HARRISSE means by calling him “*religieux de Saint-Vincent de Paule*” (*Christophe Colomb*, tom. ii. p. 55). Vincent de Paul was not born till 1576.

himself as a diplomatist in the dispute with France  
Friar Boyle. over the border province of Rousillon.

This person was a native of Catalonia, and his name was Bernardo Boyle, which strongly suggests an Irish origin. Alexander VI. appointed him his apostolic vicar for the Indies,<sup>1</sup> and he seems to have been the first clergyman to perform mass on the western shores of the Atlantic. To assist the vicar, the six Indians brought over by Columbus were baptized at Barcelona, with the king and queen for their godfather and godmother. It was hoped that they would prove useful as missionaries, and when one of them presently died he was said to be the first Indian ever admitted to heaven.<sup>2</sup>

The three summer months were occupied in fitting out the little fleet. There were fourteen caravels, and three larger store-ships known as carracks. Horses, mules, and other cattle were put on board,<sup>3</sup> as well as vines and sugar-canes, and the seeds of several European cereals, for it was intended to establish a permanent colony upon Hispaniola. In the course of this work some slight matters of disagreement came up between Columbus and Fonseca, and the question having been referred to the sovereigns, Fonseca was mildly snubbed and told that he must in all respects be guided by the Admiral's wishes. From that time forth this ungodly prelate nourished a deadly ha-

<sup>1</sup> Not for "the New World," as Irving carelessly has it in his *Columbus*, vol. i. p. 346. No such phrase had been thought of in 1493, or until long afterward.

<sup>2</sup> Herrera, *Hist. de las Indias*, decad. i. lib. ii. cap. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. xlv.

tred toward Columbus, and never lost an opportunity for whispering evil things about him. The worst of the grievous afflictions that afterward beset the great discoverer must be ascribed to the secret machinations of this wretch.

At last the armament was ready. People were so eager to embark that it was felt necessary to restrain them. It was not intended to have more than 1,200, but about 1,500 in all contrived to go, so that some of the caravels must have been overcrowded. The character of the company was very different from that of the year before. Those who went in the first voyage were chiefly common sailors. Now there were many aristocratic young men, hot-blooded and feather-headed hidalgos whom the surrender of Granada had left without an occupation. Most distinguished among these was Alonso de Ojeda, a dare-devil of unrivalled muscular strength, full of energy and fanfaronade, and not without generous qualities, but with very little soundness of judgment or character. Other notable personages in this expedition were Columbus's youngest brother Giacomo (henceforth called Diego), who had come from Genoa at the first news of the Admiral's triumphant return; the monk Antonio de Marchena,<sup>1</sup> whom historians have so long confounded with the prior Juan Perez; an Aragonese gentleman named Pedro Margarite, a favourite of the king and destined to work sad mischief; Juan

Notable persons who embarked on the second voyage.

<sup>1</sup> He went as astronomer, from which we may perhaps suppose that scientific considerations had made him one of the earliest and most steadfast upholders of Columbus's views.

Ponce de Leon, who afterwards gave its name to Florida; Francisco de Las Casas, father of the great apostle and historian of the Indies; and, last but not least, the pilot Juan de La Cosa, now charged with the work of chart-making, in which he was an acknowledged master.<sup>1</sup>

The pomp and bustle of the departure from Cadiz, September 25, 1493, at which the Admiral's two sons, Diego and Ferdinand, were present, must have been one of the earliest recollections of the younger boy, then just five years of age.<sup>2</sup> Again Columbus stopped at the Canary islands, this time to take on board goats and sheep, pigs and fowls, for he had been struck by the absence of all such animals on the coasts which he had visited.<sup>3</sup> Seeds of melons, oranges, and lemons were also taken. On the 7th of October the ships weighed anchor, heading a trifle to the south of west, and after a pleasant and uneventful voyage they sighted land on the 3d of November.<sup>4</sup> It

<sup>1</sup> See Harris, *Christophe Colomb*, tom. ii. pp. 55, 56; Las Casas, *Hist. de las Indias*, tom. i. p. 498; Fabié, *Vida de Las Casas*, Madrid, 1879, tom. i. p. 11; Oviedo, *Hist. de las Indias*, tom. i. p. 467; Navarrete, *Coleccion de viages*, tom. ii. pp. 143-149.

<sup>2</sup> "E con questo preparamento il mercoledì ai 25 del mese di settembre dell' anno 1493 un' ora avanti il levar del sole, essendovi io e mio fratel presenti, l' Ammiraglio levò le ancore," etc. *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. xlv.

<sup>3</sup> Eight sows were bought for 70 maravedis apiece, and "destas ocho puercas se han multiplicado todos los puercos que, hasta hoy, ha habido y hay en todas estas Indias," etc. Las Casas, *Historia*, tom. ii. p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> The relation of this second voyage by Dr. Chanca may be found in Navarrete, tom. i. pp. 198-241; an interesting relation in Italian by Simone Verde, a Florentine merchant then living in

turned out to be a small mountainous island, and as it was discovered on Sunday they called it Dominica. In a fortnight's cruise in these Caribbean waters they discovered and named several islands, such as Marigalante, Guadaloupe, Antigua, and others, and at length reached Porto Rico. The inhabitants of these islands were ferocious cannibals, very different from the natives encountered on the former voyage. There were skirmishes in which a few Spaniards were killed with poisoned arrows. On Guadaloupe the natives lived in square houses made of saplings intertwined with reeds, and on the rude porticoes attached to these houses some of the wooden pieces were carved so as to look like serpents. In some of these houses human limbs were hanging from the roof, cured with smoke, like ham; and fresh pieces of human flesh were found stewing in earthen kettles, along with the flesh of parrots. Now at length, said Peter Martyr, was proved the truth of the stories of Polyphemus and the Læstrygonians, and the reader must look out lest his hair stand on end.<sup>1</sup> These western Læstrygonians were known as Caribbees, Caribales, or Canibales, and have thus furnished an epithet which we have since learned to apply to man-eaters the world over.

Cruise among  
the cannibal  
islands.

Valladolid, is published in HARRISSE, *Christophe Colomb*, tom. ii. pp. 68-78. The narrative of the curate of Los Palacios is of especial value for this voyage.

<sup>1</sup> Martyr, *Epist.* cxlvii. *ad Pomponium Lætum*; cf. *Odyssey*, x. 119; Thucyd. vi. 2. — Irving (vol. i. p. 385) finds it hard to believe these stories, but the prevalence of cannibalism, not only in these islands, but throughout a very large part of aboriginal America, has been superabundantly proved.

It was late at night on the 27th of November that Columbus arrived in the harbour of La Navidad and fired a salute to arouse the attention of the party that had been left there the year before. There was no reply and the silence seemed fraught with evil omen. On going ashore next morning and exploring the neighbourhood, the Spaniards came upon sights of dismal significance.

Fate of the colony at La Navidad.

The fortress was pulled to pieces and partly burnt, the chests of provisions were broken open and emptied, tools and fragments of European clothing were found in the houses of the natives, and finally eleven corpses, identifiable as those of white men, were found buried near the fort. Not one of the forty men who had been left behind in that place ever turned up to tell the tale. The little colony of La Navidad had been wiped out of existence. From the Indians, however, Columbus gathered bits of information that made a sufficiently probable story. It was a typical instance of the beginnings of colonization in wild countries. In such instances human nature has shown considerable uniformity. Insubordination and deadly feuds among themselves had combined with reckless outrages upon the natives to imperil the existence of this little party of rough sailors. The cause to which Horace ascribes so many direful wars, both before and since the days of fairest Helen, seems to have been the principal cause on this occasion. At length a fierce chieftain named Caonabo, from the region of Xaragua, had attacked the Spaniards in overwhelming force, knocked their blockhouse about

their heads, and butchered all that were left of them.

This was a gloomy welcome to the land of promise. There was nothing to be done but to build new fortifications and found a town. The site chosen for this new settlement, which was named Isabella, was at a good harbour about thirty miles east of Monte Christi. It was chosen because Columbus understood from the natives that it was not far from there to the gold-bearing mountains of Cibao, a name which still seemed to signify Cipango. Quite a neat little town was presently built, with church, market-place, public granary, and dwelling-houses, the whole encompassed with a stone wall. An exploring party led by Ojeda into the mountains of Cibao found gold dust and pieces of gold ore in the beds of the brooks, and returned elated with this discovery. Twelve of the ships were now sent back to Spain for further supplies and reinforcements, and specimens of the gold were sent as an earnest of what was likely to be found.

Building of  
Isabella.

Exploration  
of Cibao.

At length, in March, 1494, Columbus set forth, with 400 armed men, to explore the Cibao country. The march was full of interest. It is upon this occasion that we first find mention of the frantic terror manifested by Indians at the sight of horses. At first they supposed the horse and his rider to be a kind of centaur, and when the rider dismounted this separation of one creature into two overwhelmed them with supernatural terror. Even when they had begun to get over this notion they

were in dread of being eaten by the horses.<sup>1</sup> These natives lived in houses grouped into villages, and had carved wooden idols and rude estufas for their tutelar divinities. It was ascertained that different tribes tried to steal each other's idols and even fought for the possession of valuable objects of "medicine."<sup>2</sup> Columbus observed and reported the customs of these people with some minuteness. There was nothing that agreed with Marco Polo's descriptions of Cipango, but so far as concerned the discovery of gold mines, the indications were such as to leave little doubt of the success of this reconnaissance. The Admiral now arranged his forces so as to hold the inland regions just visited and gave the general command to Margarite, who was to continue the work of exploration. He left his brother, Diego Columbus, in charge of the colony, and taking three caravels set sail from Isabella on the 24th of April, on a cruise of discovery in these Asiatic waters.

A brief westward sail brought the little squadron into the Windward Passage and in sight of Cape Mayzi, which Columbus on his first voyage had named Cape Alpha and Omega as being the easternmost point on the Chinese coast. He believed that if he were to sail to the right of this cape he should have the continent on his port side for a thousand miles and more, as far as Quinsay and Cambaluc (Peking). If he had

Cape Alpha  
and Omega.

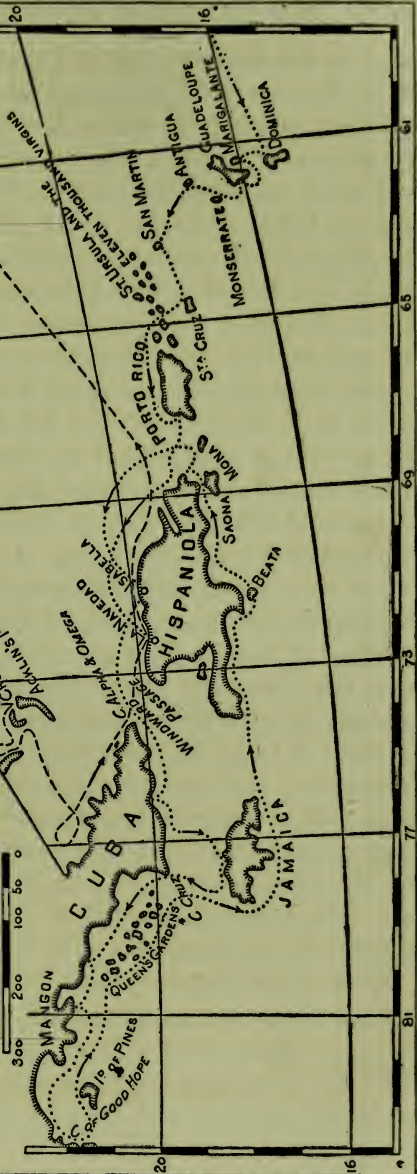
<sup>1</sup> For an instance of 400 hostile Indians fleeing before a single armed horseman, see *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. lii. ; Las Casas, *Hist.* tom. ii. p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Compare the Fisherman's story of Drogio, above, pp. 246, 252.

# DISCOVERIES MADE BY COLUMBUS IN HIS FIRST AND SECOND VOYAGES

FIRST VOYAGE  
SECOND VOYAGE

ENGLISH STATUTE MILES



sailed in this direction and had succeeded in keeping to the east of Florida, he would have kept a continent on his port side, and a thousand miles would have taken him a long way toward that Vinland which our Scandinavian friends would fondly have us believe was his secret guiding-star, and the geographical position of which they suppose him to have known with such astounding accuracy. But on this as on other occasions, if the Admiral had ever received any information about Vinland, it must be owned that he treated it very cavalierly, for he chose the course to the left of Cape Mayzi. His decision is intelligible if we bear in mind that he had not yet circumnavigated Hayti and was not yet cured of his belief that its northern shore was the shore of the great Cipango. At the same time he had seen enough on his first voyage to convince him that the relative positions of Cipango and the mainland of Cathay were not correctly laid down upon the Toscanelli map. He had already inspected two or three hundred miles of the coast to the right of Cape Mayzi without finding traces of civilization; and whenever inquiries were made about gold or powerful kingdoms the natives invariably pointed to the south or southwest. Columbus, therefore, decided to try his luck in this direction. He passed to the left of Cape Mayzi and followed the southern coast of Cuba.

By the 3d of May the natives were pointing so persistently to the south and off to sea that he changed his course in that direction and soon came upon the northern coast of the island which we still know by its native name

Discovery of  
Jamaica.

Jamaica. Here he found Indians more intelligent and more warlike than any he had as yet seen. He was especially struck with the elegance of their canoes, some of them nearly a hundred feet in length, carved and hollowed from the trunks of tall trees. We may already observe that different tribes of Indians comported themselves very differently at the first sight of white men. While the natives of some of the islands prostrated themselves in adoration of these sky-creatures, or behaved with a timorous politeness which the Spaniards mistook for gentleness of disposition, in other places the red men showed fight at once, acting upon the brute impulse to drive away strangers. In both cases, of course, dread of the unknown was the prompting impulse, though so differently manifested. As the Spaniards went ashore upon Jamaica, the Indians greeted them with a shower of javelins and for a few moments stood up against the deadly fire of the cross-bows, but when they turned to flee, a single bloodhound, let loose upon them, scattered them in wildest panic.<sup>1</sup>

Finding no evidences of civilization upon this beautiful island, Columbus turned northward and struck the Cuban coast again at the point which still bears the name he gave it, Cape Cruz. Between the general contour of this end of Cuba and that of the eastern extremity of Cathay upon the Toscanelli map there is a curious resemblance, save that the direc-

Coasting the  
south side  
of Cuba.

<sup>1</sup> Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, cap. cxxv. Domesticated dogs were found generally in aboriginal America, but they were very paltry curs compared to these fierce hounds, one of which could handle an unarmed man as easily as a terrier handles a rat.

tion is in the one case more east and west and in the other more north and south. Columbus passed no cities like Zaiton, nor cities of any sort, but when he struck into the smiling archipelago which he called the Queen's Gardens, now known as Cayos de las Doce Leguas, he felt sure that he was among Marco Polo's seven thousand spice islands. On the 3d of June, at some point on the Cuban coast, probably near Trinidad, the crops of several doves were opened and spices found in them. None of the natives here had ever heard of an end to Cuba, and they believed it was endless.<sup>1</sup> The next country to the west of themselves was named Mangon, and it was inhabited by people with tails which they carefully hid by wearing loose robes of cloth. This information seemed decisive to Columbus. Evidently this Mangon was Mangi, the province in which was the city of Zaiton, the province just south of Cathay. And as for the tailed men, the book of Mandeville had a story of some naked savages in eastern Asia who spoke of their more civilized neighbours as wearing clothes in order to cover up some bodily peculiarity or defect. Could there be any doubt that the Spanish caravels had come at length to the coast of opulent Mangi?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As a Greek would have said, *ἡπειρος*, a continent.

<sup>2</sup> Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, cap. cxxvii. Mr. Irving, in citing these same incidents from Bernaldez, could not quite rid himself of the feeling that there was something strange or peculiar in the Admiral's method of interpreting such information: "Animated by one of the pleasing illusions of his ardent imagination, Columbus pursued his voyage, with a prosperous breeze, along the supposed continent of Asia." (*Life of Columbus*, vol. i. p. 493.) 'This lends a false colour to the picture, which the general reader

Under the influence of this belief, when a few days later they landed in search of fresh water, and a certain archer, on the lookout for game, caught distant glimpses of a flock of tall white cranes feeding in an everglade, he fled to his comrades with the story that he had seen a party of men clad in long white tunics, and all agreed that these must be the people of

The "people  
of Mangon."

Mangon.<sup>1</sup> Columbus sent a small company ashore to find them. It is needless to add that the search was fruitless, but footprints of alligators, interpreted as footprints of griffins guarding hoarded gold,<sup>2</sup> frightened the men back to their ships.

is pretty sure to make still falser. To suppose the southern coast of Cuba to be the southern coast of Toscanelli's Mangi required no illusion of an "ardent imagination." It was simply a plain common-sense conclusion reached by sober reasoning from such data as were then accessible (i. e. the Toscanelli map, amended by information such as was understood to be given by the natives); it was more probable than any other theory of the situation likely to be devised from those data; and it seems fanciful to us to-day only because knowledge acquired since the time of Columbus has shown us how far from correct it was. Modern historians abound in unconscious turns of expression—as in this quotation from Irving—which project modern knowledge back into the past, and thus destroy the historical perspective. I shall mention several other instances from Irving, and the reader must not suppose that this is any indication of captiousness on my part toward a writer for whom my only feeling is that of sincerest love and veneration.

<sup>1</sup> These tropical birds are called *soldados*, or "soldiers," because their stately attitudes remind one of sentinels on duty. The whole town of Angostura, in Venezuela, was one day frightened out of its wits by the sudden appearance of a flock of these cranes on the summit of a neighbouring hill. They were mistaken for a war-party of Indians. Humboldt, *Voyage aux régions équinoxiales du Nouveau Continent*, tom. ii. p. 314.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 287, note.

From the natives, with whom the Spaniards could converse only by signs, they seemed to learn that they were going toward the realm of Prester John;<sup>1</sup> and in such wise did they creep along the coast to the point, some fifty miles west of Broa Bay, where it begins to trend decidedly to the southwest. Before they had reached Point Mangles, a hundred miles farther on, inasmuch as they found this southwesterly trend persistent, the proof that they were upon the coast of the Asiatic continent began to seem complete. Columbus thought that they had passed the point (lat. 23°, long. 145° on Toscanelli's map) where the coast of Asia began to trend steadily toward the southwest.<sup>2</sup> By pursuing this coast he felt sure that he would eventually reach the peninsula (Malacca) which Ptolemy, who knew of it only by vague hearsay, called the

<sup>1</sup> For these events, see Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, cap. cxxiii.; F. Columbus, *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. lvi.; Muñoz, *Historia del Nuevo Mundo*, lib. v. § 16; Humboldt, *Examen critique*, tom. iv. pp. 237-263; Irving's *Columbus*, vol. i. pp. 491-504.

<sup>2</sup> That is to say, he thought he had passed the coast of Mangi (southern China) and reached the beginning of the coast of Champa (Cochin China; see Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. ii. p. 213). The name Champa, coming to European writers through an Italian source, was written Ciampa and Ciamba. See its position on the Behaim and Toscanelli maps, and also on Ruysch's map, 1508, below, vol. ii. p. 114. Peter Martyr says that Columbus was sure that he had reached the coast of Gangetic (i. e. what we call Farther) India: "Indiæ Gangetidis continentem eam (Cubæ) plagam esse contendit Colonus." *Epist. xciii. ad Bernardinum*. Of course Columbus understood that this region, while agreeing well enough with Toscanelli's latitude, was far from agreeing with his longitude. But from the moment when he turned eastward on his first voyage he seems to have made up his mind that Toscanelli's longitudes needed serious amendment. Indeed he had always used different measurements from Toscanelli.

Golden Chersonese.<sup>1</sup> An immense idea now flitted through the mind of Columbus. If he could reach and double that peninsula

The Golden  
Chersonese.

he could then find his way to the mouth of the Ganges river; thence he might cross the Indian ocean, pass the Cape of Good Hope (for Dias had surely shown that the way was open), and return that way to Spain after circumnavigating the globe! But fate had reserved this achievement for another man of great heart and lofty thoughts, a quarter of a century later, who should indeed accomplish what Columbus dreamed, but only after crossing another Sea of Darkness, the most stupendous body of water on our globe, the mere existence of which until after Columbus had died no European ever suspected.<sup>2</sup> If Columbus had now sailed about a hundred miles farther, he would have found the end of Cuba, and might perhaps have skirted the northern shore of Yucatan and come upon the barbaric splendours of Uxmal and Campeche. The excitement which such news would have caused in Spain might perhaps have changed all the rest of his life and saved him from the worst of his troubles. But the crews were now unwilling to go farther, and the Admiral realized that it would be impossible to undertake such a voyage as he had in mind with no more than their present outfit. So it was decided to return to Hispaniola.

<sup>1</sup> For an account of Ptolemy's almost purely hypothetical and curiously distorted notions about southeastern Asia, see Bunbury's *History of Ancient Geography*, vol. ii. pp. 604-608.

<sup>2</sup> See below, vol. ii. pp. 200-210.

Upon consultation with La Cosa and others, it was unanimously agreed that they were upon the coast of the continent of Asia. The evidence seemed conclusive. From Cape Mayzi (Alpha and Omega) they had observed, upon their own reckoning, 335 leagues, or about 1,000 geographical miles, of continuous coast running steadily in nearly the same direction.<sup>1</sup> Clearly it was too long for the coast of an island; and then there was the name Mangon = Mangi. The only puzzling circumstance was that they did not find any of Marco Polo's cities. They kept getting scraps of information which seemed to refer to gorgeous kingdoms, but these were always in the dim distance. Still there was no doubt that they had discovered the coast of a continent, and of course such a continent could be nothing else but Asia!

Such unanimity of opinion might seem to leave nothing to be desired. But Columbus had already met with cavillers. Before he started on this cruise from Isabella, some impatient hidalgos, disgusted at finding much to do and little to get, had begun to hint that the Admiral was a humbug, and that his "Indies" were no such great affair after all. In order to silence these ill-natured critics, he sent his notary, accompanied by four witnesses, to every person in those three caravels, to get a sworn statement. If anybody had a grain of doubt about this coast being the coast of Asia, so that you could

<sup>1</sup> The length of Cuba from Cape Mayzi to Cape San Antonio is about 700 English miles. But in following the sinuosities of the coast, and including tacks, the estimate of these pilots was probably not far from correct.

go ashore there and walk on dry land all the way to Spain if so disposed, let him declare his doubts once for all, so that they might now be duly considered. No one expressed any doubts. All declared, under oath, their firm belief. It was then agreed that if any of the number should thereafter deny or contradict this sworn statement, he should have his tongue slit;<sup>1</sup> and if an officer, he should be further punished with a fine of 10,000 maravedis, or if a sailor, with a hundred lashes. These proceedings were embodied in a formal document, dated June 12, 1494, which is still to be seen in the Archives of the Indies at Seville.<sup>2</sup>

A solemn  
expression of  
opinion.

Having disposed of this solemn matter, the three caravels turned eastward, touching at the Isle of Pines and coasting back along the south side of Cuba. The headland where the Admiral first became convinced of the significance of the curvature of the coast, he named Cape of Good Hope,<sup>3</sup> believing it to be much nearer the goal which all were seeking than the other cape of that name, discovered by Dias seven years before.

It will be remembered that the Admiral, upon his first voyage, had carried home with him two theories, — first, that in the Cuban coast he had already discovered that of the con-

Vicissitudes of  
theory.

<sup>1</sup> “É cortada la lengua;” “y le cortarian la lengua.” Irving understands it to mean cutting off the tongue. But in those days of symbolism slitting the tip of that unruly member was a recognized punishment for serious lying.

<sup>2</sup> It is printed in full in Navarrete, tom. ii. pp. 143-149.

<sup>3</sup> It is given upon La Cosa's map; see below, vol. ii., frontispiece.

continent of Asia, secondly that Hispaniola was Cipango. The first theory seemed to be confirmed by further experience; the second was now to receive a serious shock. Leaving Cape Cruz the caravels stood over to Jamaica, leisurely explored the southern side of that island, and as soon as adverse winds would let them, kept on eastward till land appeared on the port bow. Nobody recognized it until an Indian chief who had learned some Spanish hailed them from the shore and told them it was Hispaniola. They then followed that southern coast its whole length, discovering the tiny islands, Beata, Saona, and Mona. Here Columbus, overcome by long-sustained fatigue and excitement, suddenly fell into a death-like lethargy, and in this sad condition was carried all the way to Isabella, and to his own house, where he was put to bed. Hispaniola had thus been circumnavigated, and either it was not Cipango or else that wonderland must be a much smaller affair than Toscanelli and Martin Behaim had depicted it.<sup>1</sup> There was something truly mysterious about these Strange Coasts!

When Columbus, after many days, recovered consciousness, he found his brother Bartholomew standing by his bedside. It was six years since they had last parted company at Lisbon, whence the younger brother started for England, while the elder returned to Spain. The news of Christopher's return from his

Arrival of  
Bartholomew  
Columbus.

<sup>1</sup> Hispaniola continued, however, for many years to be commonly identified with Cipango. See note D on Ruysch's map, 1508, below, vol. ii. p. 114.

first voyage found Bartholomew in Paris, whence he started as soon as he could for Seville, but did not arrive there until just after the second expedition had started. Presently the sovereigns sent him with three ships to Hispaniola, to carry supplies to the colony; and there he arrived while the Admiral was exploring the coast of Cuba. The meeting of the two brothers was a great relief to both. The affection between them was very strong, and each was a support for the other. The Admiral at once proceeded to appoint Bartholomew to the office of Adelantado, which in this instance was equivalent to making him governor of Hispaniola under himself, the Viceroy of the Indies. In making this appointment Columbus seems to have exceeded the authority granted him by the second article of his agreement of April, 1492, with the sovereigns;<sup>1</sup> but they mended the matter in 1497 by themselves investing Bartholomew with the office and dignity of Adelantado.<sup>2</sup>

Columbus was in need of all the aid he could summon, for, during his absence, the island had become a pandemonium. His brother Diego, a man of refined and studious habits, who afterwards became a priest, was too mild in disposition to govern the hot-heads who had come to Hispaniola to get rich without labour. They would not submit to the rule of this foreigner. Instead of doing honest work they roamed about the island, abusing the Indians and slaying one another in silly quarrels. Chief among

Mutiny in  
Hispaniola;  
desertion of  
Boyle and  
Margarite.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 417.

<sup>2</sup> Las Casas, *Hist. de las Indias*, tom. ii. p. 80.

the offenders was King Ferdinand's favourite, the commander Margarite; and he was aided and abetted by Friar Boyle. Some time after Bartholomew's arrival, these two men of Aragon gathered about them a party of malcontents and, seizing the ships which had brought that mariner, sailed away to Spain. Making their way to court, they sought pardon for thus deserting the colony, saying that duty to their sovereigns demanded that they should bring home a report of what was going on in the Indies. They decried the value of Columbus's discoveries, and reminded the king that Hispaniola was taking money out of the treasury much faster than it was putting it in; an argument well calculated to influence Ferdinand that summer, for he was getting ready to go to war with France over the Naples affair. Then the two recreants poured forth a stream of accusations against the brothers Columbus, the general purport of which was that they were gross tyrants not fit to be trusted with the command of Spaniards.

No marked effect seems to have been produced by these first complaints, but when Margarite and Boyle were once within reach of Fonseca, we need not wonder that mischief was soon brewing. It was unfortunate for Columbus that his work of exploration was hampered by the necessity of founding a colony and governing a parcel of unruly men let loose in the wilderness, far away from the powerful restraints of civilized society. Such work required undivided attention and extraordinary talent for command. It does not appear that Columbus was lacking in such talent. On the con-

trary both he and his brother Bartholomew seem to have possessed it in a high degree. But the situation was desperately bad when the spirit of mutiny was fomented by deadly enemies at court. I do not find adequate justification for the charges of tyranny brought against Columbus. The veracity and fairness of the history of Las Casas are beyond question; in his divinely beautiful spirit one sees now and then a trace of tenderness even for Fonseca, whose conduct toward him was always as mean and malignant as toward Columbus. One gets from Las Casas the impression that the Admiral's high temper was usually kept under firm control, and that he showed far less severity than most men would have done under similar provocation. Bartholomew was made of sterner stuff, but his whole career presents no instance of wanton cruelty; toward both white men and Indians his conduct was distinguished by clemency and moderation. Under the government of these brothers a few scoundrels were hanged in Hispaniola. Many more ought to have been.

The government of Columbus was not tyrannical.

Of the attempt of Columbus to collect tribute from the native population, and its consequences in developing the system of *repartimientos* out of which grew Indian slavery, I shall treat in a future chapter.<sup>1</sup> That attempt, which was ill-advised and ill-managed, was part of a plan for checking wanton depredations and regulating the relations between the Spaniards and the Indians. The colonists behaved so badly toward

Troubles with the Indians.

<sup>1</sup> See below, vol. ii. pp. 433, 434.

the red men that the chieftain Caonabo, who had destroyed La Navidad the year before, now formed a scheme<sup>1</sup> for a general alliance among the native tribes, hoping with sufficient numbers to overwhelm and exterminate the strangers, in spite of their solid-hoofed monsters and death-dealing thunderbolts. This scheme was revealed to Columbus, soon after his return from the coast of Cuba, by the chieftain Guacanagari, who was an enemy to Caonabo and courted the friendship of the Spaniards. Alonso de Ojeda, by a daring stratagem, captured Caonabo and brought him to Columbus, who treated him kindly but kept him a prisoner until it should be convenient to send him to Spain. But this chieftain's scheme was nevertheless put in operation through the influence of his principal wife Anacaona. An Indian war broke out; roaming bands of Spaniards were ambushed and massacred; and there was fighting in the field, where the natives — assailed by fire-arms and cross-bows, horses and bloodhounds — were wofully defeated.

Thus in the difficult task of controlling mutinous white men and defending the colony against infuriated red men Columbus spent the first twelvemonth after his return from Cuba. In October, 1495, there arrived in the harbour of Isabella four caravels laden with welcome supplies. In one of these ships came Juan Aguado, sent by the sovereigns to gather information respecting the troubles of the colony. This

Mission of  
Aguado.

<sup>1</sup> The first of a series of such schemes in American history, including those of Sassacus, Philip, Pontiac, and to some extent Tecumseh.

appointment was doubtless made in a friendly spirit, for Columbus had formerly recommended Aguado to favour. But the arrival of such a person created a hope, which quickly grew into a belief, that the sovereigns were preparing to deprive Columbus of the government of the island; and, as Irving neatly says, "it was a time of jubilee for offenders; every culprit started up into an accuser." All the ills of the colony, many of them inevitable in such an enterprise, many of them due to the shiftlessness and folly, the cruelty and lust of idle swash-bucklers, were now laid at the door of Columbus. Aguado was presently won over by the malcontents, so <sup>Discovery of gold mines.</sup> that by the time he was ready to return to Spain, early in 1496, Columbus felt it desirable to go along with him and make his own explanations to the sovereigns. Fortunately for his purposes, just before he started, some rich gold mines were discovered on the south side of the island, in the neighbourhood of the Hayna and Ozema rivers. Moreover there were sundry pits in these mines, which looked like excavations and seemed to indicate that in former times there had been digging done.<sup>1</sup> This discovery confirmed the Admiral in a new theory, which he was beginning to form. If it should turn out that Hispaniola was not Cipango, as the last voyage seemed to suggest, perhaps it might prove to be Ophir!<sup>2</sup> Probably these ancient

<sup>1</sup> The Indians then living upon the island did not dig, but scraped up the small pieces of gold that were more or less abundant in the beds of shallow streams.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Martyr, *De Rebus Oceanicis*, dec. i. lib. iv.

excavations were made by King Solomon's men when they came here to get gold for the temple at Jerusalem! If so, one might expect to find silver, ivory, red sandal-wood, apes, and peacocks at no great distance. Just where Ophir was situated no one could exactly tell,<sup>1</sup> but the things that were carried thence to Jerusalem certainly came from "the Indies." Columbus conceived it as probably lying northeastward of the Golden Chersonese (Malacca) and as identical with the island of Hispaniola.

The discovery of these mines led to the transfer of the headquarters of the colony to the mouth of the Ozema river, where, in the summer of 1496, Bartholomew Columbus made a settlement which became the city of San Domingo.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile Aguado and the Admiral sailed for Spain early in March, in two caravels overloaded with more than two hundred homesick passengers. In choosing his course Columbus did not show so much sagacity as on his

<sup>1</sup> The original Ophir may be inferred, from *Genesis* x. 29, to have been situated where, as Milton says,

"northeast winds blow  
Sabæan odours from the spicy shore  
Of Araby the Blest,"

but the name seems to have become applied indiscriminately to the remote countries reached by ships that sailed past that coast; chiefly no doubt, to Hindustan. See Lassen, *Indische Alterthumskunde*, bd. i. p. 538.

<sup>2</sup> Bartholomew's town was built on the left side of the river, and was called New Isabella. In 1504 it was destroyed by a hurricane, and rebuilt on the right bank in its present situation. It was then named San Domingo after the patron saint of Domenico, the father of Columbus.

first return voyage. Instead of working northward till clear of the belt of trade-winds, he kept straight to the east, and so spent a month in beating and tacking before getting out of the Caribbean Sea. Scarcity of food was imminent, and it became necessary to stop at Guadaloupe and make a quantity of cassava bread.<sup>1</sup> It was well that this was done, for as the ships worked slowly across the Atlantic, struggling against perpetual head-winds, the provisions were at length exhausted, and by the first week in June the famine was such that Columbus had some difficulty in preventing the crews from eating their Indian captives, of whom there were thirty or more on board.<sup>2</sup>

At length, on the 11th of June, the haggard and starving company arrived at Cadiz, and Columbus, while awaiting orders from the sovereigns, stayed at the house of his good friend Bernaldez, the curate of Los Palacios.<sup>3</sup> After a month he attended court at Burgos, and was kindly received. No allusion was made to the complaints against him, and the sovereigns promised to furnish ships for a third voyage of discovery. For the moment, how-

<sup>1</sup> While the Spaniards were on this island they encountered a party of tall and powerful women armed with bows and arrows; so that Columbus supposed it must be the Asiatic island of Amazons mentioned by Marco Polo. See Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. ii. pp. 338-340.

<sup>2</sup> Among them was Caonabo, who died on the voyage.

<sup>3</sup> The curate thus heard the story of the second voyage from Columbus himself while it was fresh in his mind. Columbus also left with him written memoranda, so that for the events of this expedition the *Historia de los Reyes Católicos* is of the highest authority.

ever, other things interfered with this enterprise. One was the marriage of the son and daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella to the daughter and son of the Emperor Maximilian. The war with France was at the same time fast draining the treasury. Indeed, for more than twenty years, Castile had been at war nearly all the time, first with Portugal, next with Granada, then with France; and the crown never found it easy to provide money for maritime enterprises. Accordingly, at the earnest solicitation of Vicente Yañez Pinzon and other enterprising mariners, the sovereigns had issued a proclamation, April 10, 1495, granting to all native Spaniards the privilege of making, at their own risk and expense, voyages of discovery or traffic to the newly found coasts. As the crown was to take a pretty heavy tariff out of the profits of these expeditions, while all losses were to be borne by the adventurers, a fairly certain source of revenue, be it great or small, seemed likely to be opened.<sup>1</sup> Columbus protested against

Edicts of 1495  
and 1497.

<sup>1</sup> "All vessels were to sail exclusively from the port of Cadiz, and under the inspection of officers appointed by the crown. Those who embarked for Hispaniola without pay, and at their own expense, were to have lands assigned to them, and to be provisioned for one year, with a right to retain such lands and all houses they might erect upon them. Of all gold which they might collect, they were to retain one third for themselves, and pay two thirds to the crown. Of all other articles of merchandise, the produce of the island, they were to pay merely one tenth to the crown. Their purchases were to be made in the presence of officers appointed by the sovereigns, and the royal duties paid into the hands of the king's receiver. Each ship sailing on private enterprise was to take one or two persons named by the royal officers at Cadiz. One tenth of the tonnage of the ship was to be at the service of the crown, free of charge. One tenth of whatever such

this edict, inasmuch as he deemed himself entitled to a patent or monopoly in the work of conducting expeditions to Cathay. The sovereigns evaded the difficulty by an edict of June 2, 1497, declaring that it was never their intention "in any way to affect the rights of the said Don Christopher Columbus." This declaration was, doubtless, intended simply to pacify the Admiral. It did not prevent the authorization of voyages conducted by other persons a couple of years later; and, as I shall show in the next chapter, there are strong reasons for believing that on May 10, 1497, three weeks before this edict, an expedition sailed from Cadiz under the especial auspices of King Ferdinand, with Vicente Yañez Pinzon for its chief commander and Americus Vesputius for one of its pilots.

It was not until late in the spring of 1498 that the ships were ready for Columbus. Everything that Fonseca could do to vex and delay him was done. One of the bishop's Columbus loses his temper. minions, a converted Moor or Jew named Ximeno Breviesca, behaved with such outrageous insolence that on the day of sailing the Admiral's indignation, so long restrained, at last broke out, and he drove away the fellow with kicks and cuffs.<sup>1</sup> This imprudent act gave Fonseca the

ships should procure in the newly-discovered countries was to be paid to the crown on their return. These regulations included private ships trading to Hispaniola with provisions. For every vessel thus fitted out on private adventure, Columbus, in consideration of his privilege of an eighth of tonnage, was to have the right to freight one on his own account." Irving's *Columbus*, vol. ii. p. 76.

<sup>1</sup> "Parece que uno debiera de, en estos reveses, y, por ventura, en palábras contra él y contra la negociacion destas Indias, mas

opportunity to maintain that what the Admiral's accusers said about his tyrannical disposition must be true.

The expedition started on May 30, 1498, from the little port of San Lucar de Barrameda. There were six ships, carrying about 200 men besides the sailors. On June 21, at the Isle of Ferro, the Admiral divided his fleet, sending three ships directly to Hispaniola, while with the other three he kept on to the Cape Verde islands, whence he steered southwest on the 4th of July. A week later, after a run of about 900 miles, his astrolabe seemed to show that he was within five degrees of the equator.<sup>1</sup> There were three reasons for going so far to the south:—1, the natives of the islands already visited always

The third  
voyage.

que otro señalarse, y segun entendí, no debiera ser cristiano viejo, y creo que se llamaba Ximeno, contra el cual debió el Almirante gravemente sentirse y enojarse, y aguardó el día que se hizo á la vela, y, ó en la nao que entró, por ventura, el dicho oficial, ó en tierra quando queria desembarcarse, arrebatólo el Almirante, y dále muchas coces ó remesones, por manera que lo trató mal; y á mi parecer, por esta causa principalmente, sobre otras quejas que fueron de acá, y cosas que murmuraron dél y contra él los que bien con él no estaban y le acumularon; los Reyes indignados proveyeron de quitarle la gobernacion." Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, tom. ii. p. 199.

<sup>1</sup> The figure given by Columbus is equivalent only to 360 geographical miles (Navarrete, *Coleccion*, tom. i. p. 246), but as Las Casas (*Hist.* tom. ii. p. 226) already noticed, there must be some mistake here, for on a S. W. course from the Cape Verde islands it would require a distance of 900 geographical miles to cut the fifth parallel. From the weather that followed, it is clear that Columbus stated his latitude pretty correctly; he had come into the belt of calms. Therefore his error must be in the distance run.

pointed in that direction when gold was mentioned; 2, a learned jeweller, who had travelled in the East, had assured Columbus that gold and gems, as well as spices and rare drugs, were to be found for the most part among black people near the equator; 3, if he should not find any rich islands on the way, a sufficiently long voyage would bring him to the coast of Champa (Cochin China) at a lower point than he had reached on the preceding voyage, and nearer to the Golden Chersonese (Malacca), by doubling which he could enter the Indian ocean. It will be remembered that he supposed the southwesterly curve in the Cuban coast, the farthest point reached in his second voyage, to be the beginning of the coast of Cochin China according to Marco Polo.

Once more through ignorance of the atmospheric conditions of the regions within the tropics Columbus encountered needless perils and hardships. If he had steered from Ferro straight across the ocean a trifle south of west-southwest, he might have made a quick and comfortable voyage, with the trade-wind filling his sails, to the spot where he actually struck land.<sup>1</sup> As it was, however, he naturally followed the custom then so common, of first running to the parallel upon which he intended to sail. This The belt of calms. long southerly run brought him into the belt of calms or neutral zone between the northern and southern trade-winds, a little north of the equator.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Humboldt in 1799 did just this thing, starting from Teneriffe and reaching Trinidad in nineteen days. See Bruhn's *Life of Humboldt*, vol. i. p. 263.

<sup>2</sup> "The strength of the trade-winds depends entirely upon the

No words can describe what followed so well as those of Irving: "The wind suddenly fell, and a dead sultry calm commenced, which lasted for eight days. The air was like a furnace; the tar melted, the seams of the ship yawned; the salt meat became putrid; the wheat was parched as if with fire; the hoops shrank from the wine and water casks, some of which leaked and others burst, while the heat in the holds of the vessels was so suffocating that no one could remain below a sufficient time to prevent the damage that was taking place. The mariners lost all strength and spirits, and sank under the oppressive heat. It seemed as if the old fable of the torrid zone was about to be realized; and that they were approaching a fiery region where it would be impossible to exist."<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately, they were in a region where the ocean is comparatively narrow. The longitude reached by Columbus on July 13, when the wind died away, must have been about 36° or 37° W.,

difference in temperature between the equator and the pole; the greater the difference, the stronger the wind. Now, at the present time, the south pole is much colder than the north pole, and the southern trades are consequently much stronger than the northern, so that the neutral zone in which they meet lies some five degrees north of the equator." *Excursions of an Evolutionist*, p. 64.

<sup>1</sup> Irving's *Columbus*, vol. ii. p. 137. One is reminded of a scene in the *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*: —

"All in a hot and copper sky  
The bloody sun, at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the moon.

"Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, — nor breath nor motion;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean."

and a run of only 800 miles west from that point would have brought him to Cayenne. His course between the 13th and 21st of July must have intersected the thermal equator, or line of greatest mean annual heat on the globe, — an irregular curve which is here deflected as much as five degrees north of the equinoctial line. But although there was not a breath of wind, the powerful equatorial current was quietly driving the ships, much faster than the Admiral could have suspected, to the northwest and toward land. By the end of that stifling week they were in latitude 7° N., and caught the trade-wind on the starboard quarter. Thence after a brisk run of ten days, in sorry plight, with ugly leaks and scarcely a cask of fresh water left, they arrived within sight of land. Three mountain peaks loomed up in the offing before them, and as they drew nearer it appeared that those peaks belonged to one great mountain; wherefore the pious Admiral named the island Trinidad.

Here some surprises were in store for Columbus. Instead of finding black and woolly-haired natives, he found men of cinnamon hue, like those in Hispaniola, only — strange to Trinidad and the Orinoco. say — lighter in colour. Then in coasting Trinidad he caught a glimpse of land at the delta of the Orinoco, and called it *Isla Santa*, or Holy Island.<sup>1</sup>

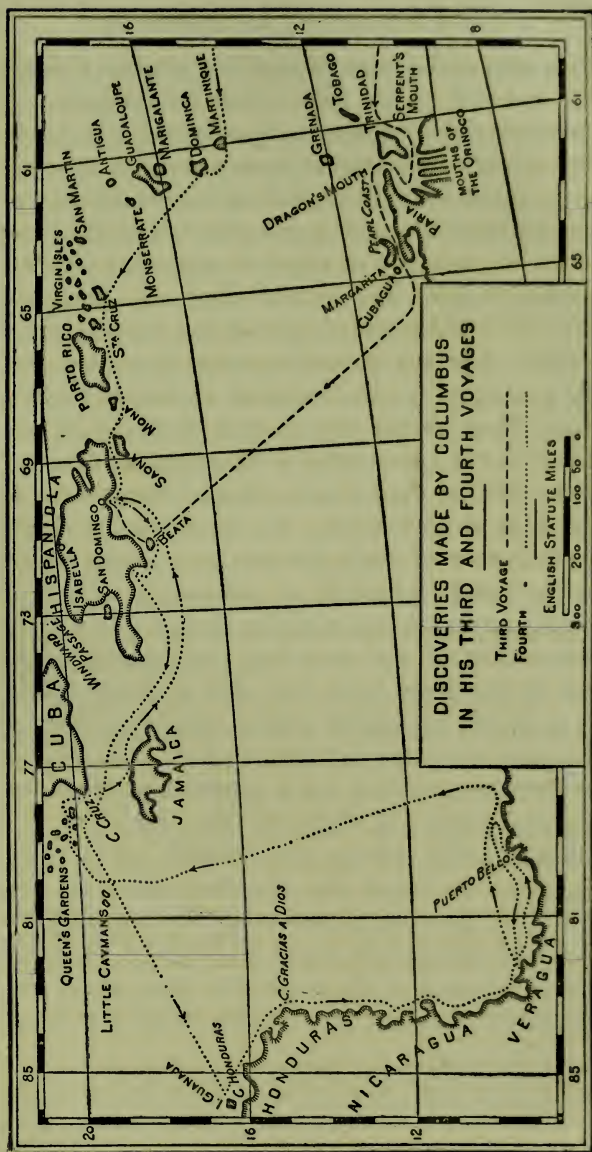
<sup>1</sup> He "gave it the name of *Isla Santa*," says Irving (vol. ii. p. 140), "little imagining that he now, for the first time, beheld that continent, that *Terra Firma*, which had been the object of his earnest search." The reader of this passage should bear in mind that the continent of South America, which nobody had ever heard of, was *not* the object of Columbus's search. The *Terra*

But, on passing into the gulf of Paria, through the strait which he named Serpent's Mouth, his ships were in sore danger of being swamped by the raging surge that poured from three or four of the lesser mouths of that stupendous river. Presently, finding that the water in the gulf was fresh to the taste, he gradually reasoned his way to the correct conclusion, that the billows which had so nearly overwhelmed him must have come out from a river greater than any he had ever known or dreamed of, and that so vast a stream of running water could be produced only upon land of continental dimensions.<sup>1</sup> This coast to the south of him was, therefore, the coast of a continent, with indefinite extension toward the south, a land not laid down upon Toscanelli's or any other map, and of which no one had until that time known anything.<sup>2</sup>

Firma which was the object of his search was the mainland of Asia, and that he never beheld, though he felt positively sure that he had already set foot upon it in 1492 and 1494.

<sup>1</sup> A modern traveller thus describes this river: "Right and left of us lay, at some distance off, the low banks of the Apuré, at this point quite a broad stream. But before us the waters spread out like a wide dark flood, limited on the horizon only by a low black streak, and here and there showing a few distant hills. This was the Orinoco, rolling with irrepressible power and majesty sea-wards, and often upheaving its billows like the ocean when lashed to fury by the wind. . . . The Orinoco sends a current of fresh water far into the ocean, its waters — generally green, but in the shallows milk-white — contrasting sharply with the indigo blue of the surrounding sea." Bates, *Central America, the West Indies, and South America*, 2d ed., London, 1882, pp. 234, 235. The island of Trinidad forms an obstacle to the escape of this huge volume of fresh water, and hence the furious commotion at the two outlets, the Serpent's Mouth and Dragon's Mouth, especially in July and August, when the Orinoco is swollen with tropical rains.

<sup>2</sup> In Columbus's own words, in his letter to the sovereigns de-



In spite of the correctness of this surmise, Columbus was still as far from a true interpretation of the whole situation as when he supposed Hispaniola to be Ophir. He entered upon a series of speculations which forcibly remind us how empirical was the notion of the earth's rotundity before the inau-

Speculations  
as to the  
earth's shape.

guration of physical astronomy by Galileo, Kepler, and Newton. We now know that our planet has the only shape possible for such a rotating mass that once was fluid or nebulous, the shape of a spheroid slightly protuberant at the equator and flattened at the poles; but this knowledge is the outcome of mechanical principles utterly unknown and unsuspected in the days of Columbus. He understood that the earth is a round body, but saw no necessity for its being strictly spherical or spheroidal. He now suggested that it was probably shaped like a pear, rather a blunt and corpulent pear, nearly spherical in its lower part, but with a short, stubby apex in the equatorial region somewhere beyond the point which he had just reached. He fancied he had been sailing up a gentle slope from the burning glassy sea where his ships had been becalmed to this strange and beautiful coast where

The mountain  
of Paradise.

he found the climate enchanting. If he were to follow up the mighty river just now revealed, it might lead him to the summit of this apex of the world, the place where the terrestrial paradise, the Garden which the Lord

scribing this third voyage, "Y digo que . . . viene este rio y procede de tierra infinita, pues al austro, de la cual fasta agora no se ha habido noticia." Navarrete, *Coleccion*, tom. i. p. 262.

planted eastward in Eden, was in all probability situated!<sup>1</sup>

As Columbus still held to the opinion that by keeping to the west from that point he should soon reach the coast of Cochin China, his conception of the position of Eden is thus pretty clearly indicated. He im-  
Relation of the "Eden continent" to "Cochin China."  
 agined it as situated about on the equator, upon a continental mass till then unknown, but evidently closely connected with the continent of Asia if not a part of it. If he had lived long enough to hear of Quito and its immense elevation, I should suppose that might very well have suited his idea of the position of Eden. The coast of this continent, upon which he had now arrived, was either continuous with the coast of Cochin China (Cuba) and Malacca, or would be found to be divided from it by a strait through which one might pass directly into the Indian ocean.

It took some little time for this theory to come to maturity in the mind of Columbus. Not expecting to find any mainland in that quarter,  
The Pearl Coast.  
 he began by calling different points of the coast different islands. Coming out through the passage which he named Dragon's Mouth, he caught distant glimpses of Tobago and Grenada to starboard, and turning westward followed the Pearl Coast as far as the islands of Margarita and Cuba-

<sup>1</sup> Thus would be explained the astounding force with which the water was poured down. It was common in the Middle Ages to imagine the terrestrial paradise at the top of a mountain. See Dante, *Purgatorio*, canto xxviii. Columbus quotes many authorities in favour of his opinion. The whole letter is worth reading. See Navarrete, tom. i. pp. 242-264.

gua. The fine pearls which he found there in abundance confirmed him in the good opinion he had formed of that country. By this time, the 15th of August, he had so far put facts together as to become convinced of the continental character of that coast, and would have been glad to pursue it westward. But now his strength gave out. During most of the voyage he had suffered acute torments with gout, his temperature had been very feverish, and his eyes were at length so exhausted with perpetual watching that he could no longer make observations. So he left the coast a little beyond Cubagua, and steered straight for Hispaniola, aiming at San Domingo, but hitting the island of Beata because he did not make allowance for the westerly flow of the currents. He arrived at San Domingo on the 30th of August, and found his brother Bartholomew, whom he intended to send at once on a further cruise along the Pearl Coast, while he himself should be resting and recovering strength.

Arrival at San  
Domingo.

But alas! there was to be no cruising now for the younger brother nor rest for the elder. It was a sad story that Bartholomew had to tell. War with the Indians had broken out afresh, and while the Adelantado was engaged in this business a scoundrel named Roldan had taken advantage of his absence to stir up civil strife. Roldan's rebellion was a result of the ill-advised mission of Aguado. The malcontents in the colony interpreted the Admiral's long stay in Spain as an indication that he had lost favour with the sovereigns and was not coming back to the is-

Roldan's  
rebellion.

land. Gathering together a strong body of rebels, Roldan retired to Xaragua and formed an alliance with the brother of the late chieftain Caonabo. By the time the Admiral arrived the combination of mutiny with barbaric warfare had brought about a frightful state of things. A party of soldiers, sent by him to suppress Roldan, straightway deserted and joined that rebel. It thus became necessary to come to terms with Roldan, and this revelation of the weakness of the government only made matters worse. Two wretched years were passed in attempts to restore order in Hispaniola, while the work of discovery and exploration was postponed. Meanwhile the items of information that found their way to Spain were skilfully employed by Fonseca in poisoning the minds of the sovereigns, until at last <sup>Fonseca's</sup> ~~machinations.~~ they decided to send out a judge to the island, armed with plenary authority to make investigations and settle disputes. The glory which Columbus had won by the first news of the discovery of the Indies had now to some extent faded away. The enterprise yielded as yet no revenue and entailed great expense; and whenever some reprobate found his way back to Spain, the malicious Fonseca prompted him to go to the treasury with a claim for pay alleged to have been wrongfully withheld by the Admiral. Ferdinand Columbus tells how some fifty such scamps were gathered one day in the courtyard of the Alhambra, cursing his father and catching hold of the king's robe, crying, "Pay us! pay us!" and as he and his brother Diego, who were pages in the queen's service, hap-

pened to pass by, they were greeted with hoots: —  
 “There go the sons of the Admiral of Mosquito-  
 land, the man who has discovered a land of vanity  
 and deceit, the grave of Spanish gentlemen!”<sup>1</sup>

An added sting was given to such taunts by a great event that happened about this time. In the summer of 1497, Vasco da Gama started from Lisbon for the Cape of Good Hope, and in the summer of 1499 he returned, after having doubled the cape and crossed the Indian ocean to Calicut on the Malabar coast of Hindustan. His voyage was the next Portuguese step sequent upon that of Bartholomew Dias. There was nothing questionable or dubious about Gama's triumph. He had seen splendid cities, talked with a powerful Rajah, and met with Arab vessels, their crews madly jealous at the unprecedented sight of Christian ships in those waters; and he brought back with him to Lisbon nutmegs and cloves, pepper and ginger, rubies and emeralds, damask robes with satin linings, bronze chairs with cushions, trumpets of carved ivory, a sunshade of crimson satin, a sword in a silver scabbard, and no end of such gear.<sup>2</sup> An old civilization had been found and a route of commerce discovered, and a factory was to be set up at once on that Indian coast. What a contrast to the miserable performance of Columbus, who had started with the flower of Spain's chivalry for rich Ci-

Gama's voyage to Hindustan, 1497.

<sup>1</sup> “Ecco i figliuoli dell' Ammiraglio de' Mosciolini, di colui che ha trovate terre di vanità e d' inganno, per sepoltura e miseria de' gentiluomini castigliani.” *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. lxxxiv.

<sup>2</sup> Major, *Prince Henry the Navigator*, pp. 398-401.

pango, and had only led them to a land where they must either starve or do work fit for peasants, while he spent his time in cruising among wild islands! The king of Portugal could now snap his fingers at Ferdinand and Isabella, and if a doubt should have sometimes crossed the minds of those chagrined sovereigns, as to whether this plausible Genoese mariner might not, after all, be a humbug or a crazy enthusiast, we can hardly wonder at it.

The person sent to investigate the affairs of Hispaniola was Francisco de Bobadilla, a knight commander of the order of Calatrava. He carried several documents, one of them Fonseca's creature, Bobadilla. directing him to make inquiries and punish offenders, another containing his appointment as governor, a third commanding Columbus and his brothers to surrender to him all fortresses and other public property.<sup>1</sup> The two latter papers were to be used only in case of such grave misconduct proved against Columbus as to justify his removal from the government. These papers were made out in the spring of 1499, but Bobadilla was not sent out until July, 1500. When he arrived at San Domingo on the 23d of August, the insurrection had been suppressed; the Admiral and Bartholomew were bringing things into order in distant parts of the island, while Diego was left in command at San Domingo. Seven ringleaders had just been hanged, and five more were in prison under sentence of death. If Bobadilla had not

<sup>1</sup> The documents are given in Navarrete, *Coleccion de viages*, tom. ii. pp. 235-240; and, with accompanying narrative, in Las Casas, *Hist. de las Indias*, tom. ii. pp. 472-487.

come upon the scene this wholesome lesson might have worked some improvement in affairs.<sup>1</sup> He destroyed its moral in a twinkling. The first day after landing, he read aloud, at the church door, the paper directing him to make inquiries and punish offenders; and forthwith demanded of Diego Columbus that the condemned prisoners should be delivered up to him. Diego declined to take so important a step until he could get orders from the Admiral. Next day Bobadilla read his second and third papers, proclaimed himself governor, called on Diego to surrender the fortress and public buildings, and renewed his demand for the prisoners. As Diego still hesitated to act before news of these proceedings could be sent to his brother, Bobadilla broke into the fortress, took the prisoners out, and presently set them free. All the rebellious spirits in the colony were thus drawn to the side of Bobadilla, whose royal commission, under such circumstances, gave him irresistible power. He threw Diego into prison and loaded him with fetters. He seized the Admiral's house, and confiscated all his personal property, even including his business papers and private letters. When the Admiral arrived in San Domingo, Bobadilla, without even waiting to see him, sent an officer to put Columbus in chains. him in irons and take him to prison. When Bartholomew arrived, he received the same treatment. The three brothers were

<sup>1</sup> No better justification for the government of the brothers Columbus can be found than to contrast it with the infinitely worse state of affairs that ensued under the administrations of Bobadilla and Ovando. See below, vol. ii. pp.

confined in different places, nobody was allowed to visit them, and they were not informed of the offences with which they were charged. While they lay in prison, Bobadilla busied himself with inventing an excuse for this violent behaviour. Finally he hit upon one at which Satan from the depths of his bottomless pit must have grimly smiled. He said that he had arrested and imprisoned the brothers only because he had reason to believe they were inciting the Indians to aid them in resisting the commands of Ferdinand and Isabella!! In short, from the day of his landing Bobadilla made common cause with the insurgent rabble, and when they had furnished him with a ream or so of charges against the Admiral and his brothers, it seemed safe to send these gentlemen to Spain. They were put on board ship, with their fetters upon them, and the officer in charge was instructed by Bobadilla to deliver them into the hands of Bishop Fonseca, who was thus to have the privilege of glutting to the full his revengeful spite.

The master of the ship, shocked at the sight of fetters upon such a man as the Admiral, would have taken them off, but Columbus <sup>Return to Spain.</sup> would not let it be done. No, indeed! they should never come off except by order of the sovereigns, and then he would keep them for the rest of his life, to show how his labours had been rewarded.<sup>1</sup> The event—which always justifies true manliness—proved the sagacity of this proud

<sup>1</sup> Las Casas, *Hist. de las Indias*, tom. ii. p. 501; F. Columbus, *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. lxxxv. Ferdinand adds that he had often seen these fetters hanging in his father's room.

demeanour. Fonseca was baulked of his gratification. The clumsy Bobadilla had overdone the business. The sight of the Admiral's stately and venerable figure in chains, as he passed through the streets of Cadiz, on a December day of that year 1500, awakened a popular outburst of sympathy for him and indignation at his persecutors. While on the ship he had written or dictated a beautiful and touching letter<sup>1</sup> to a lady of whom the queen was fond, the former nurse of the Infante, whose untimely death, three years since, his mother was still mourning. This letter reached the court at Granada, and was read to the queen before she had heard of Bobadilla's performances from any other quarter. A courier was sent in all haste to Cadiz, with orders that the brothers should at once be released, and with a letter to the Admiral, inviting him to court and enclosing an order for money to cover his expenses. The scene in the Alhambra, when Columbus arrived, is one of the most touching in history. Isabella received him with tears in her eyes, and then this much-enduring old man, whose proud and masterful spirit had so long been proof against all wrongs and insults, broke down. He threw himself at the feet of the sovereigns in an agony of tears and sobs.<sup>2</sup>

How far the sovereigns should be held responsible for the behaviour of their agent is not altogether easy to determine. The appointment of such a creature as Bobadilla was a sad blunder, but one

Release of  
Columbus.

<sup>1</sup> It is given in full in Las Casas, *op. cit.* tom. ii. pp. 502-510.

<sup>2</sup> Herrera, *Historia*, dec. i. lib. iv. cap. 10.

such as is liable to be made under any government. Fonseca was very powerful at court, and Bobadilla never would have dared to proceed as he did if he had not known that the bishop would support him. Indeed, from the indecent haste with which he went about his work, without even the pretence of a judicial inquiry, it is probable that he started with private instructions from that quarter. But, while Fonseca had some of the wisdom along with the venom of the serpent, Bobadilla was simply a jackass, and behaved so that in common decency the sovereigns were obliged to disown him. They took no formal or public notice of his written charges against the Admiral, and they assured the latter that he should be reimbursed for his losses and restored to his viceroyalty and other dignities.

This last promise, however, was not fulfilled; partly, perhaps, because Fonseca's influence was still strong enough to prevent it, partly because the sovereigns may have come to the sound and reasonable conclusion that for the present there was no use in committing the government of that disorderly rabble in Hispaniola to a foreigner. What was wanted was a Spanish priest, and a military priest withal, of the sort that Spain then had in plenty. Obedience to priests came natural to Spaniards. The man now selected was Nicolas de Ovando, a knight commander of the order of Alcántara, of whom we shall have more to say hereafter.<sup>1</sup> Suffice it now to observe that he proved himself a famous

*How far were the sovereigns responsible for Bobadilla?*

*Ovando, another creature of Fonseca, appointed governor of Hispaniola.*

<sup>1</sup> See below, vol. ii. pp. 435-446.

disciplinarian, and that he was a great favourite with Fonseca, to whom he seems to have owed his appointment. He went out in February, 1502, with a fleet of thirty ships carrying 2,500 persons, for the pendulum of public opinion had taken another swing, and faith in the Indies was renewed. Some great discoveries, to be related in the next chapter, had been made since 1498; and, moreover, the gold mines of Hispaniola were beginning to yield rich treasures.

But, while the sovereigns were not disposed to restore Columbus to his viceroyalty, they were quite ready to send him on another voyage of discovery which was directly suggested by the recent Portuguese voyage of Gama. Since nothing was yet known about the discovery of a New World, the achievement of Gama seemed to have eclipsed that of Columbus. Spain must make a response to Portugal. As already observed, the Admiral supposed the coast of his "Eden continent" (South America) either to be continuous with the coast of Cochin China (Cuba) and Malacca, or else to be divided from that coast by a strait. The latter opinion was the more probable, since Marco Polo and a few other Europeans had sailed from China into the Indian ocean without encountering any great continent that had to be circumnavigated. The recent expedition of Vespucci and Ojeda (1499-1500) had followed the northern coast of South America for a long distance to the west of Cubagua, as far as the gulf of Maracaibo. Columbus now decided to return to the coast of Cochin China (Cuba) and

Purpose of  
Columbus's  
fourth voyage.

follow the coast southwestward until he should find the passage between his Eden continent and the Golden Chersonese (Malacca) into the Indian ocean. He would thus be able to reach by this western route the same shores of Hindustan which Gama had lately reached by sailing eastward. So confident did he feel of the success of this enterprise, that he wrote a letter to Pope Alexander VI., renewing his vow to furnish troops for the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre.<sup>1</sup> It was no doubt the symptom of a reaction against his misfortunes that he grew more and more mystical in these days, consoling himself with the belief that he was a chosen instrument in the hands of Providence for enlarging the bounds of Christendom. In this mood he made some studies on the prophecies, after the fantastic fashion of his time,<sup>2</sup> and a habit grew upon him of attributing his discoveries to miraculous inspiration rather than to the good use to which his poetical and scientific mind had put the data furnished by Marco Polo and the ancient geographers.

The armament for the Admiral's fourth and last voyage consisted of four small caravels, of from fifty to seventy tons burthen, with crews numbering, all told, 150 men. His Crossing the Atlantic. brother Bartholomew, and his younger son Ferdinand, then a boy of fourteen, accompanied him. They sailed from Cadiz on the 11th of May, 1502,

<sup>1</sup> Navarrete, *Coleccion*, tom. ii. pp. 280-282.

<sup>2</sup> The MS. volume of notes on the prophecies is in the Colombina. There is a description of it in Navarrete, tom. ii. pp. 260-273.

and finally left the Canaries behind on the 26th of the same month. The course chosen was the same as on the second voyage, and the unfailing trade-winds brought the ships on the 15th of June to an island called Mantinino, probably Martinique, not more than ten leagues distant from Dominica. The Admiral had been instructed not to touch at Hispaniola upon his way out, probably for fear of further commotions there until Ovando should have succeeded in bringing order out of the confusion ten times worse confounded into which Bobadilla's misgovernment had thrown that island. Columbus might stop there on his return, but not on his outward voyage. His intention had, therefore, been, on reaching the cannibal islands, to steer for Jamaica, thence make the short run to "Cochin China," and then turn southwards. But as one of his caravels threatened soon to become unmanageable, he thought himself justified in touching at San Domingo long enough to hire a sound vessel in place of her. Ovando had assumed the government there in April, and a squadron of 26 or 28 ships, containing Roldan and Bobadilla, with huge quantities of gold wrung from the enslaved Indians, was ready to start for Spain about the end of June. In one of these ships were 4,000 pieces of gold destined for Columbus, probably a part of the reimbursement that had been promised him. On the 29th of June the Admiral arrived in the harbour and stated the nature of his errand. At the same time, as his practised eye had detected the symptoms of an approaching hurricane, he requested permission to stay in the harbour until it should

be over, and he furthermore sent to the commander of the fleet a friendly warning not to venture out to sea at present. His requests and his warnings were alike treated with contumely. He was ordered to leave the harbour, and did so in great indignation. As his first care was for the approaching tempest, he did not go far but found safe anchorage in a sheltered and secluded cove, where his vessels rode the storm with difficulty but without serious damage. Meanwhile the governor's great fleet had rashly put out to sea, and was struck with fatal fury by wind and wave. Twenty or more ships went to the bottom, with Bobadilla, Roldan, and most of the Admiral's principal enemies, besides all the ill-gotten treasure; five or six shattered caravels, unable to proceed, found their way back to San Domingo; of all the fleet, only one ship arrived safe and sound in Spain, and that, says Ferdinand, was the one that had on board his father's gold. Truly it was such an instance of poetical justice as one does not often witness in this world. "We will not inquire now," says Las Casas, who witnessed the affair, "into this remarkable divine judgment, for at the last day of the world it will be made quite clear to us."<sup>1</sup> If such judgments were more often visited upon the right persons, perhaps the ways of Providence would not have so generally come to be regarded as inscrutable.

Columbus not  
allowed to  
stop at San  
Domingo.

<sup>1</sup> "Aqueste tan gran juicio de Dios no curemos de escudriñallo, pues en el dia final deste mundo nos será bien claro." *Hist. de las Indias*, tom. iii. p. 32; cf. *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. lxxxvii. As Las Casas was then in San Domingo, having come out in Ovando's fleet, and as Ferdinand Columbus was with his father, the testimony is very direct.

The hurricane was followed by a dead calm, during which the Admiral's ships were carried by the currents into the group of tiny islands called the Queen's Gardens, on the south side of Cuba. With the first favourable breeze he took a southwesterly course, in order to strike that Cochin-Chinese coast farther down toward the Malay peninsula. This brought him directly to the island of Guanaja and to Cape Honduras, which he thus reached without approaching the Yucatan channel.<sup>1</sup>

Upon the Honduras coast the Admiral found evidences of semi-civilization with which he was much elated, — such as copper knives and hatchets, pottery of skilled and artistic workmanship, and cotton garments finely woven and beautifully dyed. Here the Spaniards first tasted the *chicha*, or maize beer, and marvelled at the heavy clubs, armed with sharp blades of obsidian, with which the soldiers of Cortes were by and by to become unpleasantly acquainted. The people here wore cotton clothes, and, according to Ferdinand, the women covered themselves as carefully as the Moorish women of Granada.<sup>2</sup> On inquiring as to the sources of gold and other wealth, the Admiral was now referred to the west, evidently to Yucatan and Guatemala, or, as he supposed, to the neighbourhood of the Ganges. Evidently the way to reach these countries

<sup>1</sup> In the next chapter I shall give some reasons for supposing that the Admiral had learned the existence of the Yucatan channel from the pilot Ledesma, coupled with information which made it unlikely that a passage into the Indian ocean would be found that way. See below, vol. ii. p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. lxxxviii.

was to keep the land on the starboard and search for the passage between the Eden continent and the Malay peninsula.<sup>1</sup> This course at first led Columbus eastward for a greater number of leagues than he could have relished. Wind and current were dead against him, too; and when, after forty days of wretched weather, he succeeded in doubling the cape which marks on that coast the end of Honduras and the beginning of Nicaragua, and found it turning square to the south, it was doubtless joy at this auspicious change of direction, as well as the sudden relief from head-winds, that prompted him to name that bold prominence *Cape Gracias a Dios*, or Thanks to God.

As the ships proceeded southward in the direction of Veragua, evidences of the kind of semi-civilization which we recognize as characteristic of that part of aboriginal America grew more and more numerous. Great houses were seen, built of "stone and lime," or perhaps of rubble stone with adobe mortar. Walls were adorned with carvings and pictographs. Mummies were found in a good state of preservation. There were signs of abundant gold; the natives wore plates

<sup>1</sup> Irving (vol. ii. pp. 386, 387) seems to think it strange that Columbus did not at once turn westward and circumnavigate Yucatan. But if — as Irving supposed — Columbus had not seen the Yucatan channel, and regarded the Honduras coast as continuous with that of Cuba, he could only expect by turning westward to be carried back to Cape Alpha and Omega, where he had already been twice before! In the next chapter, however, I shall show that Columbus may have shaped his course in accordance with the advice of the pilot Ledesma.

of it hung by cotton cords about their necks, and were ready to exchange pieces worth a hundred ducats for tawdry European trinkets. From these people Columbus heard what we should call the first "news of the Pacific Ocean," though it had no such meaning to his mind. From what he heard he understood that he was on the east side of a peninsula, and that there was another sea on the other side, by gaining which he might in ten days reach the mouth of the Ganges.<sup>1</sup> By proceeding on his present course he would soon come to a "narrow place" between the two seas. There was a curious equivocation here. No doubt the Indians were honest and correct in what they tried to tell Columbus. But by the "narrow place" they meant narrow land, not narrow water; not a strait which connected but an isthmus which divided the two seas, not the Strait of Malacca, but the Isthmus of Darien!<sup>2</sup> Columbus, of course, understood them to mean the strait for which he was looking, and in his excitement at approaching the long-expected goal he pressed on without waiting to verify the reports of gold mines in the neighbourhood, a thing that could be done at any time.<sup>3</sup> By the 5th of December, however,

Fruitless  
search for the  
Strait of Ma-  
lacca.

<sup>1</sup> Navarrete, *Coleccion de viages*, tom. i. p. 299.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. lxxxix.; Humboldt, *Examen Critique*, tom. i. p. 350.

<sup>3</sup> "Nothing could evince more clearly his generous ambition than hurrying in this brief manner along a coast where wealth was to be gathered at every step, for the purpose of seeking a strait which, however it might produce vast benefit to mankind, could yield little else to himself than the glory of the discovery." Irving's *Columbus*, vol. ii. p. 406. In this voyage, however, the

having reached a point on the isthmus, a few leagues east of Puerto Bello, without finding the strait, he yielded to the remonstrances of the crews, and retraced his course to Veragua. If the strait could not be found, the next best tidings to carry home to Spain would be the certain information of the discovery of gold mines, and it was decided to make a settlement here which might serve as a base for future operations.

Futile attempt  
to make a set-  
tlement.

Three months of misery followed. Many of the party were massacred by the Indians, the stock of food was nearly exhausted, and the ships were pierced by worms until it was feared there would be no means left for going home. Accordingly, it was decided to abandon the enterprise and return to Hispaniola.<sup>1</sup> In order to allow for the strong westerly currents in the Caribbean sea, the Admiral first sailed eastward almost to the gulf of Darien, and then turned to the north. The allowance was not enough, however. The ships were again carried into the Queen's Gardens, where they were caught in a storm and nearly beaten to pieces. At length, on St. John's eve, June 23, 1503, the crazy wrecks—now full of water and unable to sail another league—were beached on

express purpose from the start was to find the strait of Malacca as a passage to the very same regions which had been visited by Gama, and Columbus expected thus to get wealth enough to equip an army of Crusaders. Irving's statement does not correctly describe the Admiral's purpose, and as savouring of misplaced eulogy, is sure to provoke a reaction on the part of captious critics.

<sup>1</sup> A graphic account of these scenes, in which he took part, is given by Ferdinand Columbus, *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. xciii.-cvi.

the coast of Jamaica and converted into a sort of rude fortress; and while two trusty men were sent over to San Domingo in a canoe, to obtain relief, Columbus and his party remained shipwrecked in Jamaica. They waited there a whole year before it proved possible to get any relief from Ovando. He was a slippery knave, who knew how to deal out promises without taking the first step toward fulfilment.

It was a terrible year that Columbus spent upon the wild coast of Jamaica. To all the horrors inseparable from such a situation there was added the horror of mutiny. The year did not end until there had been a pitched battle, in which the doughty Bartholomew was, as usual, victorious. The ringleader was captured, and of the other mutineers such as were not slain in the fight were humbled and pardoned. At length Ovando's conduct began to arouse indignation in San Domingo, and was openly condemned from the pulpit; so that, late in June, 1504, he sent over to Jamaica a couple of ships which brought away the Admiral and his starving party. Ovando greeted the brothers Columbus with his customary hypocritical courtesy, which they well understood. During the past year the island of Hispaniola had been the scene of atrocities such as have scarcely been surpassed in history. I shall give a brief account of them in a future chapter. Columbus was not cheered by what he saw and heard, and lost no time in starting for Spain. On the 7th of November, 1504, after a tempestuous voyage and narrow escape from ship-

wreck, he landed at San Lucar de Barrameda and made his way to Seville. Queen Isabella was then on her death-bed, and Last return to Spain. breathed her last just nineteen days later.

The death of the queen deprived Columbus of the only protector who could stand between him and Fonseca. The reimbursement for the wrongs which he had suffered at that man's hands was never made. The last eighteen months of the Admiral's life were spent in sickness and poverty. Accumulated hardship and disappointment had broken him down, and he died on Ascension day, May 20, 1506, at Valladolid. Death of Columbus.

So little heed was taken of his passing away that the local annals of that city, "which give almost every insignificant event from 1333 to 1539, day by day, do not mention it."<sup>1</sup> His remains were buried in the Franciscan monastery at Valladolid, whence they were removed in 1513 to the monastery of Las Cuevas, at Seville, where the body of his son Diego, second Admiral and Viceroy of the Indies, was buried in 1526. Ten years after this date, the bones of father and son were removed to Hispaniola, to the cathedral of San Domingo; whence they have since been transferred to Havana. The result of so many removals has been to raise doubts as to whether the ashes now reposing at Havana are really those of Columbus and his son; and over this question there has been much critical discussion, of a sort that we may cheerfully leave to those who like to spend their time over such trivialities.

<sup>1</sup> HARRISSE, *Notes on Columbus*, New York, 1866, p. 73.

There is a tradition that Ferdinand and Isabella, at some date unspecified, had granted to Columbus, as a legend for his coat-of-arms, the noble motto:—

Á Castilla y á Leon  
Nuevo mundo dió Colon,

*i. e.* “To Castile-and-Leon Columbus gave a New World;” and we are further told that, when the Admiral’s bones were removed to Seville, this motto was, by order of King Ferdinand, inscribed upon his tomb.<sup>1</sup> This tradition crumbles under the touch of historical criticism. The Admiral’s coat-of-arms, as finally emblazoned under his own inspection at Seville in 1502, quarters the royal Castle-and-Lion of the kingdom of Castile with his own devices of five anchors, and a group of golden islands with a bit of Terra Firma, upon a blue sea. But there is no legend of any sort, nor is anything of the kind mentioned by Las Casas or Bernaldez or Peter Martyr. The first allusion to such a motto is by Oviedo, in 1535, who gives it a somewhat different turn:—

Por Castilla y por Leon  
Nuevo mundo halló Colon,

*i. e.* “For Castile-and-Leon Columbus found a New World.” But the other form is no doubt the better, for Ferdinand Columbus, at some time not later than 1537, had adopted it, and it may be read to-day upon his tomb in the cathedral at Seville. The time-honoured tradition has evidently trans-

<sup>1</sup> *Vita del Ammiraglio*, cap. cvii. This is unquestionably a gloss of the translator Ulloa. Cf. HARRISSE, *Christophe Colomb*, tom. ii. pp. 177-179.

ferred to the father the legend adopted, if not originally devised, by his son.



But why is this mere question of heraldry a matter of importance for the historian? Simply because it furnishes one of the most striking among many illustrations of the fact that at no time during the life of Columbus, nor for some years after his death, did anybody use the phrase "New World" with conscious reference to *his* discoveries. At the time of his death their true significance had not yet begun to dawn upon the mind of any voyager or any writer. It was supposed that he had found a new route to the Indies by sailing west, and that in the course of this achievement he had discovered some new islands and a bit or bits of Terra Firma of more or less doubtful commercial value. To group these items of discovery into an organic whole, and to ascertain that they belonged to a whole quite distinct from the Old World, required the work of many other discoverers, companions and successors to Columbus. In the following chapter I shall

endeavour to show how the conception of the New World was thus originated and at length became developed into the form with which we are now familiar.









GETTY CENTER LIBRARY



3 3125 00025 5287

